THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION VOL. 8 NO. 11 NOVEMBER 1988

RESTAURANTSUSA

Restaurant Turnarounds

WN 11/01 NUMBER88100 3WF
ED KIANKA
CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SER
STATISTICAL REFERENCE INDEX
4520 EAST-WEST HWY S800
BETHESDA MD 20814

SEMINARS

Basic Foodservice Courses

Dining Room Management

11/29	Austin, TX
11/30	Houston, TX
12/6	Newark, NJ
12/7	Philadelphia, PA
12/12	Tampa, FL
12/13	Miami, FL
1/24	Boston, MA
1/25	Hartford, CT
1/31	San Francisco, CA
2/1	Los Angeles, CA
2/7	Honolulu, HI
2/21	Rochester, NY
2/22	Pittsburgh, PA
2/28	Portland, OR
3/1	Seattle, WA
3/14	New York, NY
3/15	Burlington, VT

Kitchen Management

11/16	Newark, NJ
12/5	Los Angeles, CA
12/5	Dallas, TX
12/6	Riverside, CA
12/6	Austin, TX
1/23	Louisville, KY
1/24	Jacksonville, FL
1/30	Williamsburg, VA
2/1	Little Rock, AR
2/6	Minneapolis, MN
2/7	Milwaukee, WI
2/23	Savannah, GA
3/5	Shreveport, LA
3/6	Atlanta, GA
3/14	Detroit, MI

Foodservice Management Courses

Banquet Management

1/24	Orlando, FL
1/26	San Antonio, TX
2/7	Baltimore, MD
2/8	Charlotte, NC
3/7	Colorado Springs, CO

Food Cost Management

12/7	Minneapolis, MN
12/8	Chicago, IL
1/24	Orlando, FL
1/25	Atlanta, GA
2/7	Denver, CO
3/14	Berkshires, MA
3/16	Washington, DC
3/20	Pittsburgh, PA

Off-Premises Catering

11/29–30	Tampa, FL
1/24–25	Philadelphia, PA
2/6–7	Boston, MA
3/7–8	Louisville, KY
3/28–29	Tyson's Corner, VA

Planning Successful Buffets

12/12	Charlotte, NC
2/20	Orlando, FL
3/6	Burlingame, CA
3/7	San Diego, CA
3/20	Baltimore, MD

Profitability

11/16	Austin, TX
11/17	Dallas, TX
11/29	Charlotte, NC
1/25	Winnipeg, Manitoba
1/27	Toronto, Ontario
2/15	St. Louis, MO
2/16	Cincinnati, OH
3/21	Washington, DC
3/22	Buffalo, NY

The Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association has settled into its new office in Chicago. For information about the programs, contact:

Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association
250 South Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606

(312) 715-1010

If your company is interested in our in-house programs, call or write to the attention of Larry Fidel at the above address.

COURSES AND BOOKS AVAILABLE

Certification Courses
Applied Foodservice Sanitation
Applied Foodservice Purchasing
Managing Quantity Food Production
Management by Menu
The Financial Ingredient in Foodservice Management
Foodservice: A Managerial Approach
Legal Aspects of Foodservice Management
Foodservice Supervision: Achieving Success Through People

Self-Development Courses
Protecting Restaurant Profits: Managing Security
Effective Communication
Managing People
Restaurant Operations and Control
Restaurant Purchasing
Bar and Beverage Management
Helping People Grow
Service: Managing the Guest Experience

EXECUTIVE STUDY GROUP SERIES

Financial Officers
4/5–7 Orlando, FL

Food Purchasing Managers
5/18–19 Chicago, IL

Internal Auditors
3/14–15 Sanibel Island, FL

Labor Relations
2/16–17 Los Angeles, CA

Large Independent Operators
1/31–2/3 New Orleans, LA

Large Independent Operators
1/31–2/3 New Orleans, LA

Management Information Systems
4/18–21 San Antonio, TX

Marketing Executives
5/17–29 Chicago, IL

Multi-unit Architects, Engineers and Construction Officers (MAECO)
5/17–19 Chicago, IL

Quality Assurance
4/26–28 Cincinnati, OH

Safety Officers
1/18–20 Scottsdale, AZ

Tax Executives
4/5–7 Orlando, FL

For more information on specific study groups, contact: Philip Kralovec, (312) 853-2525.

Published by the National Restaurant Association

RESTAURANTSUSA

VOL. 8 NO. 10 NOVEMBER 1988

Chairman of the Board and President Jim L. Peterson
Vice President Harris "Bud" Rusitzky
Treasurer Michael Hurst

Executive Vice President William P. Fisher

Communications Committee Chairman Paul W. Lazar
Vice Chairman John C. Metz

Members James W. Britt, DeVere "Jerry" Burtenshaw, Stanton D. Elliott, Lee Hasenour, Robert E. Heilman, Martin L. Horn, Jr., Thomas J. Kapp, Thomas A. Kershaw, Peter Kleiser, William H. Latham, M. Van Lewis, Jr., Gretchen Mathers, James H. Maynard, Paul M. Robinson, J. William Rooks, Charles F. Smith, Dick R. Stubbs

Senior Director Editor Jeffrey R. Prince
Editor Sylvia Rivchun-Somerville
Managing Editor Elizabeth Wallace
Washington Report Coordinator Denise Roach
Staff Contributors Julie Fintel, Stephanie Gordon, Philip Kralovec, Nancy Michalski, Susan Mills, Paul Moomaw, Sebastian O'Kelly, Anne E. Papa, Claire Regan, B. Hudson Riehle, David Slater
Art Direction *Magazine:* Tom Bellucci *Covers:* Richard Earle, Cecelia Niepold
Word Processing Operator Agnes Harkins

Editorial office and association headquarters 1200 Seventeenth St., N.W. Washington, DC 20036-3097 (202) 331-5900
Chicago office 150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2000 Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 853-2525

Restaurants USA (ISSN 0890-5584) is published monthly, except combined June/July issue, by the National Restaurant Association, 1200 Seventeenth St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036-3097. Membership dues include a one-year subscription to ***Restaurants USA***. The nonmember subscription fee is $125 per year. Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC 20036-3097 and additional mailing offices. Copyright © National Restaurant Association 1988. Postmaster, send address change to ***Restaurants USA***, 1200 Seventeenth St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036-3097.

© All rights reserved.
Reprint with permission only.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Jim L. Peterson, President and Chief Operating Officer
Whataburger, Inc., Corpus Christi, TX

Thanks for our legislative victories in 1988

The 100th Congress completed its business in Washington on October 22. In a session that featured an especially tough labor agenda, our efforts to stem attempts at government intervention were successful.

□ The bill to raise the minimum hourly wage was set aside.

□ Mandatory parental-leave legislation was set aside.

□ Mandatory health-insurance legislation was set aside.

These bills were all scrapped during the session because of the pressure applied by you as active association members and by other pro-business advocates.

□ We also convinced Congress this year to exempt most foodservice operators from the burdensome advance notice requirements of plant-closings legislation. With other American employers, we defeated a totally impracticable plan to make employers pay for medical monitoring of workers exposed to even small amounts of chemicals deemed hazardous.

□ And we successfully fended off a surprise attack on the business-meal tax deduction. For these successes, thanks are due to the thousands of you who repeatedly responded to our "calls to action," blitzing Capitol Hill with cards, mailgrams, letters and phone calls that informed Congress about our side of the story.

We must look at our success as a foundation to be built upon for the future. We are certain to face many of these same battles again when the 101st Congress convenes in January.

PAC will distribute $400,000 to 160 candidates

The association's political action committee (PAC) made its influence felt in this year's congressional races. It will raise a record $400,000 for the two-year election cycle, and it will distribute those funds among the campaigns of more than 160 candidates. The PAC makes contributions to congressional candidates who support the foodservice industry's legislative concerns or who sit on committees important to our industry. Our ability to assist appropriate candidates through campaign support is another important tool in the association's government affairs efforts.

Come to the career symposium in January

Service industries all over the country are being faced with the disturbing labor-shortage problem, and our industry is no different. To help combat the problem, the association is sponsoring a landmark event, the Symposium on Career Opportunities in Foodservice, to be held in Washington on January 10, 1989. This meeting is your chance to find out what kinds of programs you can offer to attract specific types of workers. The conference will be attended by both foodservice operators and individuals representing various demographic groups, such as the Hispanic Policy Development Project, the National Urban League and the National Council on Aging. These representatives will talk about the particular needs of their constituents so you can attract workers by meeting their needs—whether in regard to hours, training or special benefits. Watch for the registration brochure, which is on its way to you.

AIDS video has helpful facts

As employers we must assume responsibility for educating our employees about AIDS. Employees need to understand that AIDS is not a foodborne disease and that there is no threat of contracting the disease in the normal working environment. Education based on facts is the way for a restaurant operator to avert an AIDS-related crisis in the workplace before it happens. The association's two-part video series, *The AIDS Issue*, can help you. It is available from the association's publications department at a nominal cost.

Monterey Wine Festival: March 12-14

In its third year of association sponsorship, the Monterey Wine Festival will take place on March 12-14 in Monterey, California. This event will be packed with educational programs to help you learn about wine and build sales in this profitable area. Also on the agenda are wine-tasting receptions and an ice-carving competition.

INFO '89 will also be held in Monterey

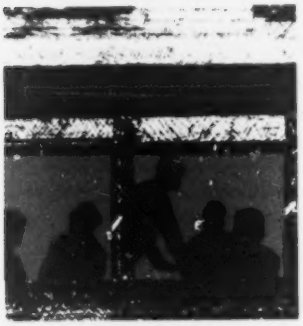
In conjunction with the festival, the 1989 INFO Conference will be held March 9-11 in Monterey. This conference is the only national conference designed exclusively for independent foodservice operators. The focus of INFO '89 is "Service: Your Survival Kit for the '90s." For more information about INFO '89, contact the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association at (312) 715-1010.

Finally, it is my pleasure to welcome the 120 new members who joined the association in October. Your participation in the association will benefit your business and will make the association more effective.

Sincerely,

Jim L. Peterson
President and Chairman of the Board

COVER STORY: RESTAURANT TURNAROUNDS



12 Attempting to turn around a failing restaurant requires quick and decisive action. Three restaurants that have undergone the turnaround process—with different results—are profiled here.

15 Building a winning team spirit
When Leonard Roberts joined Arby's Inc. in 1985 as its new president and chief executive officer, he brought with him a winning philosophy that spearheaded a dramatic turnaround in Arby's' fortunes—sales this year will reach $1.2 billion. Roberts shares his inspirational approach.

SPECIALS

8 1988 Public Affairs Conference
"Politics on the menu" was the theme of the association's fourth annual Public Affairs Conference, which drew more than 300 foodservice operators to Washington to discuss their concerns with legislators.

19 Food carts
They are mobile, flexible, affordable and innovative. Carts just might be the perfect marketing tool for your restaurant.

22 Hazelnuts—A nutty marketing idea
The hazelnut's full-bodied flavor can add pizzazz to any dish—from salads to desserts.

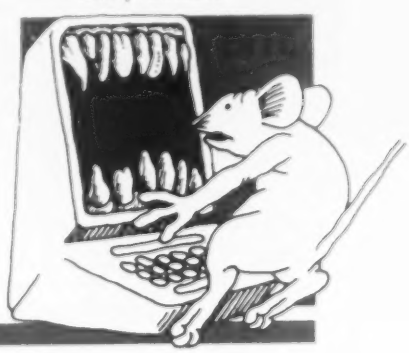
24 Finishing touches
Handcrafted items can become focal points in a restaurant, creating a distinctive ambiance customers will enjoy and remember.

26 Shuttering without shame
Every restaurateur is a dreamer, and working in his or her own restaurant is the dream come true. But a restaurateur must also be a pragmatist, and painful as it may be, closing a restaurant's doors for good is a reality that many entrepreneurs have had to face. Learning from these business failures can be the key to future successes.

28 Reflections on staying on top
Some of the nation's top restaurateurs share their "secrets of success"—how they have kept their restaurants fresh, exciting and profitable.

30 Be gentle; it's my first PC!
This first-time buyer's guide to personal computers takes the fear out of "getting with the program."

36 Vinegars
With their piquant flavors and culinary versatility, vinegars are enjoying renewed attention in restaurant kitchens. The article includes recipes and a sidebar on how to make your own flavored vinegars.



Cover photo by Robert Severi
Air-brushing by John Michael Yanson

DEPARTMENTS

6 Short Orders
- ☐ U.S. team sets world record in Frankfurt
- ☐ Southern Comfort video
- ☐ Hotel dining room judged "most elegant"
- ☐ New York association awards scholarships

7 Washington Report
- ☐ Harmful labor legislation halted

11 Boardroom
- ☐ Fall board meeting report

35 To Your Health
- ☐ Software packages for computing calories

39 Foodservice Trends
- ☐ Dinner takeout—a family occasion
- ☐ More parties include children, deals
- ☐ Occupation costs

44 Market Measure
- ☐ August 1988

45 How's Business
- ☐ Operators discuss regional business trends

47 Food for Thought
- ☐ Poupon propellant
- ☐ Invading the airwaves
- ☐ Fax food
- ☐ Keeping the memory alive
- ☐ Nurturing minorities

U.S. team sets world record in Frankfurt

The 1988 U.S. Culinary Team set a new world record by becoming the only national team in the history of the International Culinary Competition to win a gold medal in the prestigious hot food segment of the competition three times in a row. Manager Ferdinand Metz and captain Tim Ryan led national team members Mark Erickson, Hartmut Handke, Daniel Hugelier and Christopher Northmore to a third-place overall finish in the culinary "olympics." Switzerland and West Germany placed first and second.

A total of 1,000 chefs from 30 nations competed against the United States in this world-class culinary competition, held every four years in Frankfurt, West Germany. Chefs vied for gold, silver and bronze medals in four main areas of competition: cold food (show platters), hot food displayed cold, hot food, and pastries—a new category at this year's competition.

In addition to its first-place finish in the hot food competition, the U.S. Team placed second in cold food and second in pastries, missing out only in hot food displayed cold. All told, the American national and regional teams earned a combined total of 75 gold medals, 59 silver and 40 bronze.

The menu that earned the U.S. Team its gold medal consisted of three courses: Chesapeake Oyster Consomme; Napa Valley Squab with Lentils, Cabbage and Rye Turnovers; and the "Big Apple" Dessert with Kiln-Dried Cherry Sauce. The 1988 competition marks the first time that a pastry selection was included in the hot food competition.

An expert team of international judges observed every step of the preparation process, carefully measuring labor intensity, time management, waste, efficiency and teamwork. When the meals were completed and ready to be served to the public, the U.S. Team's meals were sold out in a record time of six minutes.

The 1988 U.S. Culinary Team's participation in the "olympics" is made possible by the 1988 U.S. Culinary Team Foundation, operating under the auspices of the American Culinary Federation and the National Restaurant Association.

Hotel dining room judged "most elegant"

Hotel dining rooms are successfully returning to their heyday of popularity. In 1925, the Empire Room of Chicago's Palmer House was the epitome of splendid dining and dancing. Now a restoration project has restored the room—right down to its 24-karat-gold leaf and French-crystal chandeliers—and diners approve. Affluent readers of Chicago's suburban newspapers voted the Empire Room the "most elegant" area restaurant in a recent contest.

Southern Comfort video

The burgeoning home-video market has become a stage for marketing messages, including this one by Southern Comfort, which gives tips on how to entertain at home and indirectly promotes the company's product. "A Guide to Entertaining" outlines every step of coordinating a successful party, from the invitations and decorations to food-and-drink planning. A recipe book is included with the 70-minute program. Will programs like these encourage consumers to stay at home?

New York association awards scholarships

The New York State Restaurant Association (NYSRA) presented two $1,000 scholarship awards at its annual meeting in October in Rochester, New York. Many of the New York chapters award their own scholarships, but this is the first year scholarships were awarded statewide.

To be eligible for the program, an applicant must be sponsored by a NYSRA member and be enrolled in a culinary-arts or restaurant-management program sponsored by a New York state school of higher learning. Winners are selected on the basis of their interest, experience, recommendations, talent and goal objectives.

Both of this year's recipients—Margaret Wyland-Block of Penfield and Richard Donahue of Syracuse—will use their scholarships to study foodservice administration at community colleges.

Harmful labor legislation halted

The intense grassroots lobbying efforts of the National Restaurant Association and other organizations helped block damaging legislation from becoming law this year. The time-pressed 100th Congress adjourned October 21 without passing the bulk of the aggressive labor agenda brought before it in 1988.

"Our voice has been heard," says National Restaurant Association President Jim Peterson. "But we had to speak loudly, make good arguments and show political muscle to prove that these bills were unfair and unnecessary."

Among the hotly contested bills that failed passage by the 100th Congress were proposals to raise the minimum wage, to require parental leave for workers and to mandate employer-provided health benefits. A key bill dealing with occupational risk notification also failed to make it through.

Minimum-wage issue dead for 1988

Warding off an increase in the minimum hourly wage has been a top priority for the association since legislation was first introduced by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Rep. Gus Hawkins (D-CA) in March 1987. The most recent form of the House bill, H.R. 1834, called for an increase in the minimum wage from its current $3.35 to $5.05 in 1992. The Senate bill, S. 837, would have raised the minimum by 40 cents a year for three years, reaching $4.55 in 1991.

Both bills appeared stalled this summer, until Vice President George Bush unexpectedly announced that he backed a small wage increase coupled with a training wage for new hires. Encouraged proponents of the bill were then able to bring the legislation to the Senate floor, with the House resolving to take up its version following Senate action.

After five days of Senate-floor debate that resulted in little but partisan gridlock, however, Democratic senators removed the bill from consideration.

Early in the minimum-wage debate, the National Restaurant Association compiled existing economic opinion on the issue, showing that an increase in the minimum wage would actually hurt the people it intends to help, by reducing job opportunities for entry-level workers.

Armed with this information, association members sent more than 100,000 messages to their congressional representatives, urging them to preserve job opportunities by opposing a minimum-wage increase. Groups of restaurateurs held more than 500 face-to-face meetings with their representatives, and on the day the Senate set aside the bill, more than 300 restaurant operators were in Washington, DC, to lobby their senators and representatives against a wage increase.

Parental leave dropped

Restaurateurs and other employers launched a similar grassroots lobbying campaign against mandated parental and medical leave. The House and Senate versions of parental-leave legislation would have required employees to provide 10 weeks of parental leave every two years and up to 15 weeks of medical leave annually.

Arguing that the federal government should not interfere with employer-employee relationships by mandating specific benefits, association members by the thousands contacted their Capitol Hill representatives to lobby against the bill. On October 7, less than two weeks after setting aside minimum-wage legislation, the Senate dropped parental leave from its agenda, after it became apparent the bill would be subjected to many unrelated amendments and that attempts to limit the length of debate would be unsuccessful.

Benefits slate fails

Mandated-health-benefits proposals (S. 1265, H.R. 2508) that surfaced in the 100th Congress would have required employers to provide a minimum package of health benefits to (1) all employees working more than 17½ hours a week and (2) their dependents. The National Restaurant Association estimated the proposal would cost employers an additional $1.31 per hour for employees working the industry average of 26 hours per week.

Many private businesses, it argued, simply could not afford to absorb these added costs.

Pressure from the association and other groups representing small businesses caused the bill to stall indefinitely in the House, not even making it through committee.

Risk notification act warded off

Another labor-supported initiative in the 100th Congress was the "High Risk Occupational Disease Notification and Prevention Act," a bill that would have imposed obligations on employers for employees who might be or might have been exposed to substances alleged to be hazardous. In some instances, the bill would have required employers to pay for medical monitoring for employees exposed during employment by another company.

The National Restaurant Association's members again joined forces, telling congressional representatives that despite its good intent, the risk notification act would create needless anxiety for many workers and unjustified legal liability for employers. The cost of providing medical surveillance for employees exposed while on previous jobs could break small businesses, the association pointed out.

Although the bill passed in the House, it was withdrawn from the Senate after four separate votes failed to halt a filibuster.

Challenges to arise again next year

"As each piece of legislation was introduced, our members responded in overwhelming numbers," Peterson notes. "Without these grassroots efforts, it is doubtful that any of these harmful bills, let alone all of them, would have been blocked."

Peterson cautions, however, that the fight against government intervention in businesses is not over. "There is no doubt that labor will be back again next year with many of the same proposals," he notes. "We will again need the participation of all members if we are to repeat the successes of 1988."

Sens. Alan Simpson (R-WY) and David Boren (D-OK) led off the association's fourth annual Public Affairs Conference with their discussions of congressional minimum-wage, parental-leave, immigration and business-meal-deductibility proposals. Simpson, chief architect of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, listened to restaurateurs' concerns about labor shortages and paperwork problems with the new immigration law. "The burden is on employers to let legislators know if they are experiencing labor shortages as a result of the new law," Simpson told the more than 300 foodservice operators in the audience.

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) opened up the second day of the "politics on the menu" program with a prediction that parental-leave and minimum-wage legislation will return in the next session of Congress. Harkin, the Senate sponsor of an association-backed amendment to increase the tip credit to 50 percent, emphasized the importance of grassroots lobbying and letter-writing campaigns to keep the pressure on legislators.

Rep. Bill Frenzel (R-MN), the U.S. House tax expert, echoed Harkin's advice on communicating with members of Congress. He advised restaurateurs to take the offensive on the business-meal-deductibility issue, warning that in the face of a large budget deficit, few revenue-raising measures are off limits. Frenzel urged foodservice operators to show members of Congress "that the business meal is a reasonable cost of doing business."

President Jim Peterson opened the conference.

In the audience and at the lectern, Tom Kershaw, vice chairman of the conference, contributed his perspective.

A break between speakers gave Gerard Pain (La Chaumiere, Washington, DC) and Tom Rouland, executive vice president of the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington, a chance to talk business.

Betty-Coe de Broekert, executive vice president of the Oregon Restaurant and Hospitality Association, said, "We are going to set up a conference on the state level modeled on this conference."

Arnold Hewes, executive vice president of the Minnesota Restaurant Association, told of the results of his meetings with his members of Congress.

Mississippi Restaurant Association President Bill Latham and the rest of the Mississippi delegation listened attentively to Rep. Trent Lott (R-MS).

Sen. David Boren (D-OK) discussed economic issues with restaurateurs.

Chairman of the conference Bob Wood told attendees what events were in store for them.

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) applauded association members for their active involvement in legislative issues.

There was plenty of give-and-take at the conference. Participants posed such questions as how to safeguard the business-meal tax deduction.

After a legislative briefing by association staff, which included a viewing of the association's new video that describes how to become more politically active on the grassroots level, conferees met with their senators and representatives during the "congressional visit" portion of the program. With only several weeks remaining before Congress adjourned for the year, foodservice operators had a well-timed opportunity to talk to legislators about how each piece of legislation would affect their businesses. Eleven state delegations managed to visit all of their members of Congress.

Fred Barnes and Morton Kondracke, senior editors of the *New Republic*, switched the conference's focus to the upcoming presidential election. The conservative and liberal pair debated the merits and shortcomings of the presidential candidates. And the Capitol Steps, a troupe of congressional staffers, added a light touch to the conference with their musical revue satirizing political life in Washington.

The conference was a plain-spoken event. More than one senator felt himself on the line. Sen. Alan Simpson (R-WY), sponsor of the 1986 immigration law, answered many questions from restaurateurs experiencing a labor crunch.

Association executive vice president Bill Fisher greeted Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA) at the Chef d'Oeuvre reception.

The Louisiana delegation, one of the largest at the conference, was instrumental in persuading Sen. John Breaux (D-LA) to vote "no" to cutting off debate on the parental-leave bill.

The Prime Rib pleased reception-goers' palates with its well-known lobster bisque.

Members of the Pennsylvania delegation gathered around Rep. Bill Goodling (R-PA), future minority leader of the House Education and Labor Committee, to talk about the labor agenda in the next session of Congress.

After two days of meetings and speeches, the Sixth Annual Chef d'Oeuvre Reception, held in conjunction with the Public Affairs Conference, gave restaurateurs the opportunity to meet with their legislators in a relaxed and elegant setting. More than 220 legislators joined the conference attendees at the gala reception, including Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA).

Eight of Washington's premier restaurants hosted the reception, providing their specialties ranging from beef tenderloin on rolls to blue cornmeal waffles with crab and corn salsa.

In a letter of thanks to the National Restaurant Association, Rep. James Inhofe (R-OK) said Chef d'Oeuvre "was truly one of the most outstanding events we have had the opportunity to participate in since coming to Washington."

Participating restaurants and their specialties

Maison Blanche: *Marquise au Chocolate*
Mr. K's: *Batter-dipped king crab*
Morton's: *Beef tenderloin on bread with sauces*
Old Ebbitt Grill: *Oysters and clams on the half shell; spiced shrimp cocktail*
Prime Plus: *Blue cornmeal waffles with crab and corn salsa; Indian pudding with clove ice cream; smoked free-range chicken salad*
The Prime Rib: *Lobster bisque*
Taverna Cretekou: *Roast leg of lamb; eggplant imam; spinach pies; octopus salad; tzatziki; dolmadakia; soutzoukakia*
The Watergate: *Smoked salmon fillets with sauces; artichoke hearts with shrimp salad; duck pate on brioche with pistachios and mushrooms*

Conference sponsor

The National Restaurant Association's Congressional Leadership Forum (CLF) again funded this year's Public Affairs Conference. The purpose of the CLF, the political education program of the association's Government Relations Department, is to educate members of Congress about the issues that most concern the foodservice industry and to educate association members about Congress. Contributions from the corporate captains of the foodservice industry make the many CLF activities possible.

For more information about how your company can join the Congressional Leadership Forum, call the Political Affairs office at 1-800-424-5156.

Fall board meeting report

National Restaurant Association President Jim L. Peterson presents the Vermont Lodging and Restaurant Association Award to John Pitcheos of Killington Resorts in Vermont. Peterson was recently a special guest at "A Taste of Vermont," an annual chefs' competition and culinary event.

The National Restaurant Association's Board of Directors met in Washington, DC, immediately prior to the fourth annual Public Affairs Conference. At the board meeting, association president Jim L. Peterson announced the association will be hosting what he termed a "daring " event—the Symposium on Career Opportunities in Foodservice, to be held January 10, 1989, at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington.

This conference will be attended both by foodservice operators and by individuals representing demographic groups most likely to supply future employees, such as the Hispanic Policy Development Project, the National Urban League and the National Council on Aging. Also in attendance will be representatives from the American Vocational Association and the American Association for Counseling and Development—the educators who advise and train people for employment.

Each group in attendance will have an opportunity to share positive experiences regarding employment in foodservice and to "air grievances"—to discuss their problems and to voice their needs. Model programs developed by the industry to attract and accommodate members of these groups will be examined.

"The concept is daring," Peterson told the association's board. "No doubt we will hear some things we won't like. And certainly some attendees will be surprised when we tell them our story. But from all this can only come greater knowledge and greater understanding—light, not heat."

Other business discussed at the fall board meeting included:

□ **Alcohol awareness.** A specially designated task force on alcohol awareness made the following report to the board: 1) association staff will investigate association encouragement of state laws punishing makers and users of false identification for alcoholic-beverage-purchase purposes, 2) staff will investigate furthering state laws calling for revocation of driver's licenses of individuals caught operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, 3) staff will develop a videotape for in-house alcohol-awareness training programs, and 4) staff will investigate ways the association can contribute to alcohol-education programs for teenagers.

□ **Communications.** The association's staff is continuing its program to offer media training sessions for board members. Twenty-one directors have been trained thus far. The staff is also planning a presentation on how to effectively manage state association public relations for a November conference of the International Society of Restaurant Association Executives (ISRAE) in Boston and is organizing the Symposium on Career Opportunities in Foodservice in conjunction with the Industry Image/Human Resources Task Force.

□ **Government affairs.** The board reaffirmed its policy of opposing any minimum-wage increase but favored a training-wage amendment and a tip-credit increase. The board also resolved to step up association efforts to protect the business-meal tax deduction, directing staff to devise a program outlining the economic effect of the current 80 percent deductiblity. Last, the board voted against supporting a House bill that provides monetary incentives to states with tough drunk-driving laws, because many members believe the federal government should not intrude on state and local alcohol regulations.

□ **State relations.** More than 200 new Key Contacts have been added to the association's grassroots lobbying program, bringing the number of Key Contacts to more than 600. A grassroots videotape, entitled "Politics on Your Menu," has been produced to encourage member lobbying. Since January, more than 300 grassroots meetings have been held between restaurateurs and their members of Congress at the district level or in Washington.

—Anne Papa

Board members played a key role at the association's 1988 Public Affairs Conference. Conference chairman Bob Wood and vice president Bud Rusitzky discuss the program.

RESTAURANT

by Jenny Cashman

"It's not the location that fails; it's the concept that fails."

The warning signs are easy to spot: a dropoff in business volume, disappearance of regular customers, disappointing end-of-the-month returns. Bills get harder to pay, trade credit tightens and good employees begin to look for jobs elsewhere. Promotional efforts and advertising only seem to drain the cash resources of the restaurant, rather than bring customers to the table. The business is at least in a slump, and it may well be on the skids.

Early recognition

Restaurant owners are sometimes the last to admit that their establishments are not meeting their expectations or bringing in enough profit to pay the bills. Often the restaurant represents the manifestation of long-cherished dreams, and it is hard to let go of the vision or change it if necessary to make it fit the market.

Jenny Cashman is a freelance writer in Idyllwild, California.

"You have to look at it unemotionally. What you like may not be what the customers want," says Bonnie Rotenberg, president of Restaurant Brokers of America (Boston). Her firm, which specializes in the selling and appraisal of restaurants as well as management consulting and personnel placement, has been involved in hundreds of appraisals and consulting situations in the industry. "I can't stress enough that the reason many people get into trouble is that they won't let go of their preconceived concept. If they would just distance themselves and let go of their emotions [about the restaurant], let go of their pride and joy, they could change it to something else."

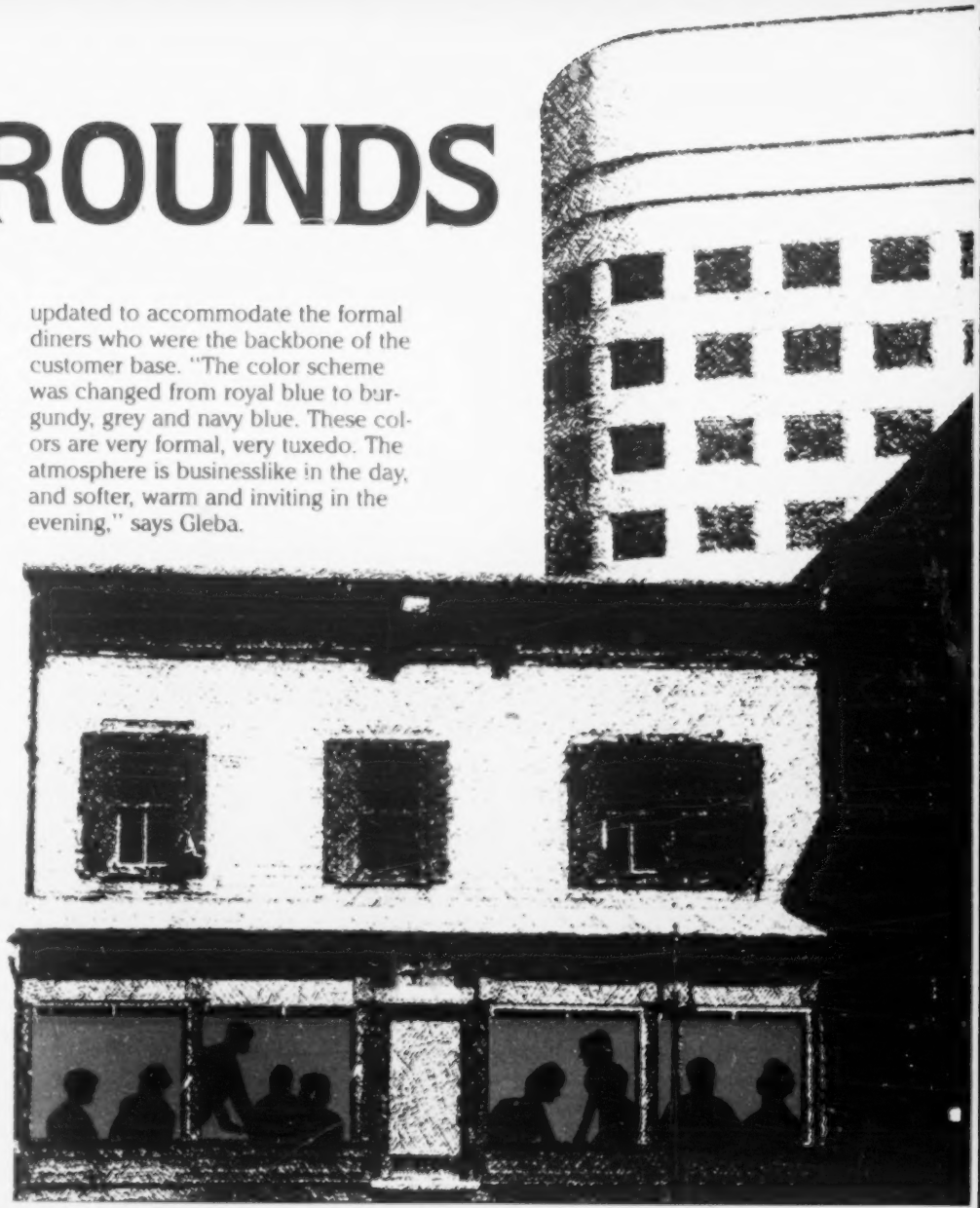
A classic example of a successful turnaround is the Fog City Diner in San Francisco. Opened in June 1985, in a building where three restaurants had come and gone, the diner became and stayed a success, with more than 50 percent of its business coming from regulars.

Why had the previous restaurants failed? "It's not the location that fails; it's the concept that fails," explains Bill Upson, a partner in Real Restaurants, the company that owns the diner. "Most restaurateurs aren't flexible enough, don't adjust to the needs of the customers."

Although the site is on a triangular lot near the financial district with no surrounding buildings, the building "looked like an army barracks" until Real Restaurants moved in. "We created something that was unique and identifiable, visually stunning—'a diner for today,' a diner that was not a retrofit, not something playing off nostalgia," adds Bill Higgins, another partner in the business.

The partners created a very rich-looking interior: finished in hardwoods and mahoganies, wood booths (15) with fabric-covered cushioned seats, hex tile on the floor and hand-blown sconces made of glass and brass. And then they topped off the redesign with a kinetic menu that changes every month but includes

'TURNAROUNDS



such signature items as the garlic custard with shiitake mushrooms, pasilla peppers with five cheeses and avocado salsa, and crab cakes developed under the creative direction of partner Cindy Pawlcyn.

"It was an obvious thing that had to happen. San Francisco had never seen a diner before," says Higgins.

A concept can be changed

It is not always necessary to start from scratch, of course. Some concepts can be reworked. After a period of lackluster performance, The Tower restaurant, a 23-year-old establishment on the 32nd floor of the TransAmerica Building in the heart of downtown Los Angeles, has experienced a turnaround.

"Two decades ago, the restaurant was famous for its hospitality. The manager, Raymond Andrieux, was so amiable with customers, it was a given that he would come and sit at your table," explains William A. Gleba, the restaurant's new manager.

Andrieux ran the restaurant for TransAmerica for 18 years. After his death, a management company was brought in to run things. "When you bring in a corporate structure, the human element is often lost. It can become institutional," muses Gleba. After a year and a half of slow attrition in customer counts, another management company was brought in for a year—but again with no success.

Finally, TransAmerica hired the Marriott Corporation, which handed the turnaround challenge to Gleba, who has been involved with four other turnarounds—restaurants, hotels and country clubs on the verge of bankruptcy. Gleba decided "to bring it back to its Old-World flair." The restaurant had been offering classic French fare for years, which Gleba decided was a mistake. "The eating public doesn't like the heavy sauces and creams of French cuisine," he noted. So, with new chef Michael Casey, the menu was revised in favor of lighter offerings.

At the same time, the decor was updated to accommodate the formal diners who were the backbone of the customer base. "The color scheme was changed from royal blue to burgundy, grey and navy blue. These colors are very formal, very tuxedo. The atmosphere is businesslike in the day, and softer, warm and inviting in the evening," says Gleba.

The seating arrangements were also changed. Some tables had been on a raised floor area. "No one wanted to sit there; they felt on display," notes Gleba. So he cut into that area and put in private booths. Two private dining rooms were added—one holding up to six people; the other up to 12. Since 90 percent of the restaurant's clientele is there to conduct business, these booths also provided a place for business lunches. Cordless telephones were added so phones could be brought to any table.

The makeover was done in stages and completed in less than three months, thanks to around-the-clock work in some instances. The restaurant was closed five weeks for the final makeover.

Finally, music was added. "First, we added a piano player at lunch; but the piano was a little too loud, so we went to the harp," says Gleba. "The ambiance was much more relaxed."

For dinner entertainment, a piano player was brought in Tuesday through Saturday, to make it "the place to come for that special occasion. Dinner is a challenge for us. When they leave the downtown area, it's hard to bring them back in," says Gleba.

"Our location is our obstacle," he explains. People worry about the safety of downtown. "This is one of the most secure buildings in Los An-

geles. There are guards posted on the 30th floor with binoculars, and foot patrols in the area. We offer free valet parking. People need to be educated that they are safe if they come here."

To tell people that the restaurant had changed, Gleba changed the logo and hired a top-notch public relations firm, which began an advertising campaign. Gleba also planned a cocktail party, sending invitations to 700 CEOs, presidents, owners and managers of local businesses to introduce this target market to the new Tower restaurant.

Since the restaurant reopened in mid-July, dinner business has increased 20 percent and lunch 30 percent.

Leslie and Andy Reis, a chef/business team (who have successfully positioned Cafe Provencal as a destination restaurant in the Chicago area), reluctantly closed the doors on Bodega Bay and Leslie's—a two-restaurant combination in Evanston, Illinois, this fall.

Leslie's was opened in 1981-82 to offer a casual, upscale coffee shop to the Evanston area, complete with jazz piano bar. By 1983-84 it was clear the restaurant was not working up to its potential, so the owners reevaluated their position. "We did some focus groups and discovered we weren't anybody's first choice," explains Andy Reis. So they revamped the menu toward a more contemporary flavored food, not tied to any one cuisine," explains Leslie Reis. "Sort of a fantasy, a fun way to explore all foods and not have any boundaries."

A tasting bar allowed for "grazing," with an ever-changing menu, including such favorites as *Sesame Spinach, Shrimp with Pistachio Sauce* and *Kalamari Salad with Basil and Mint.* Great care was taken with the beer list, which offered 25 of the world's best. The jazz music featured top-name artists: John Campbell, Kelly Brand, Kelly Sill, John Hickey, Fred Simon, Joel Spencer.

For a while, the turnaround took, and the restaurant was a hit. The *Chicago Tribune* gave the restaurants three-star ratings, and the first year they did $2 million in sales. But the second year they were beset with problems. The food was still great, the service still met with compliments, but costs increased and external factors ate away at profits.

"We were doing just fine until the Dow Jones went down 500 points last year," notes Andy Reis. "Twelve months ago we did have the restaurant turned around. This year we have never put down better food, never gotten more compliments or had more disappointing sales."

With a decline in business clientele, a harsh winter and an equally uncomfortable summer, the volume of customers coming to the restaurant didn't meet expectations or needs.

To make matters worse, new federal and local liquor taxes raised costs on drinks, costs that the owners felt could not be totally passed along to customers. So Bodega Bay and Leslie's closed their doors.

San Francisco's Fog City Diner has enjoyed success since its 1985 opening, despite the fact that three previous restaurants had failed at the same site.

Future promotional efforts will include using a helipad on the roof as an attraction and planning a special package offering "the ultimate dining experience"—limo service to an airport, a helicopter ride to the restaurant, dinner and wine, and then a return trip the same way.

"We want all of our guests to feel special. We want them to feel invited," says Gleba.

Not every turnaround works

You can do everything right toward a major turnaround and still come up short in the financial analysis. It is important to know when to give up on an idea—when to accept the reality that the restaurant is simply not paying its way.

selection, offering seafood and pasta in addition to more traditional fare.

Then in 1987 they converted the back banquet room into another restaurant, Bodega Bay, "to produce a fun, adventurous place, a high-style cafe." The red velvet, dark wood and crystal chandeliers gave way to a warm, California-Southwest decor: aqua and peach colors, navaho rugs and big urns. In January 1988 the restaurant began featuring the cuisine of one country each month, with flags and posters complementing the "globetrotting-gourmet" theme.

The food was light, spicy, eclectic, crossing the lines of Italian, Chinese, Thai and other ethnic foods. Dishes included Jamaican jerk chicken, Indonesian shrimp salad, and Oriental pork with noodles. "It was real gutsy-

Turnaround steps

There is no instant cure-all for a restaurant in trouble, no sure-fire strategy that will make for an effective turnaround. But there are steps that can help swing the pendulum in a restaurant's favor. The first step is to recognize the need for change.

Other points to consider:

- ☐ Evaluate the restaurant from multiple viewpoints
- ☐ Listen to your customers
- ☐ Give up on preconceived ideas
- ☐ Rework the concept to fit your market. ❑

Turnaround case history

Building a Winning Team Spirit

From 1982 through 1985, Arby's experienced flat to declining sales and profits. Finally, in 1986, things started to go in the right direction for Arby's. In fact, 1986 and 1987 represented back-to-back years of record sales growth, profitability and new-restaurant openings. Arby's is currently having a truly awesome year, and we will end 1988 with the very best performance in its 25-year history.

For the first eight months of 1988, Arby's' systemwide sales rose 20 percent. This compares with a growth of 6 percent for the industry as a whole. Sales this year will reach $1.2 billion. Most of Arby's major markets are currently posting some of the highest comparable sales growths in their history—comparable growth in excess of 15 percent!

Arby's' is currently forecasting a year-end systemwide comparable sales growth of about 8 percent. And finally, at the end of the third quarter in September, Arby's marked the ninth straight quarter of double-digit profit growth.

by Leonard H. Roberts

Obviously, I'm very proud of Arby's' record, proud of our turnaround. I think back to the time when I made the decision to join Arby's. I would like to tell you that story.

The move to Arby's

I started with Arby's in 1985, the easy way. That is, I started as Arby's' president and chief executive officer—and I have been stuck at that level ever since . . . with absolutely no potential for upward mobility! Seriously, after 11 years with Ralston Purina, and after managing several different operating companies within this multi-billion dollar conglomerate, I finally decided to break away from the umbilical cord afforded by a large mega-corporation like Ralston Purina. I decided to do my own thing, to start my own business.

So starting in late 1984, and into 1985, I was heavily involved in negotiating a "friendly" leveraged buyout of one of Ralston's divisions . . . its foodservice operation.

During that time, coincidentally, I was contacted by several executives from the D.W.G. Corporation, the holding company and parent of the Arby's Corporation.

The D.W.G. folks wanted me to take over the management of Arby's as its president and C.E.O. They made the offer about five times during a three-month period in early 1985, and I declined the offer each and every time.

I wasn't holding out for a better deal. I declined because I simply wanted to do my own thing. Also, the D.W.G. folks painted a picture of Arby's that portrayed it as a highly successful, smooth-running, energetic company that simply needed a chief custodian. Believe me, being chief custodian of a smooth-running company just didn't interest me.

Leonard Roberts is president and chief executive officer of Arby's Inc. in Atlanta, Georgia. This viewpoint is excerpted from a speech he delivered at the MUFSO (Multi-Unit Foodservice Operators) Conference in Washington, DC, in October.

A dinner to remember

Well, to continue the story, on June 5, 1985—and I'll never forget the date—I was invited to have dinner in Chicago with several business associates. When I arrived at the dinner table, I was surprised to learn that owners of several large Arby's franchises were at the table. This was a pure coincidence; these Arby's franchisees had no idea I had been offered and had turned down the C.E.O. position with Arby's.

After a couple of glasses of wine, the franchisees led the dinner conversation to Arby's. Well into this discussion, the picture that emerged of Arby's was quite different from the one previously painted for me. Arby's wasn't a smooth-running enterprise but rather, and I quote, "A constipated bureaucratic organization managed by a group of egomaniacs who had developed a complacency for people and an affinity for mediocrity."

Turf-guarding by the corporate hierarchy was the culture. People in the home office were preoccupied with

how close they could get to the corporate power structure. Gossiping and writing self-protective memos to each other and to the franchisee community was the modus operandi for communication.

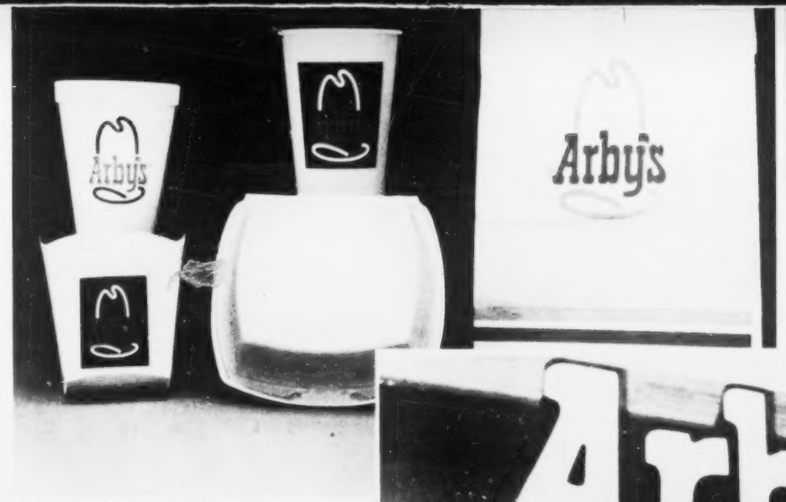
From what I heard, I believed that this company was going down the tubes. I believed that Arby's was on its last leg! Well, after about an hour of this culture shock, I excused myself from the dinner table to make a phone call. Yes, I saw a challenge. So on the phone I accepted the position of president and C.E.O. of Arby's, came back to the dinner table and made an announcement that shocked my new-found friends, the Arby's franchisees. Everyone quickly sobered up, and it was at that moment that we began the process of planning for Arby's growth and future.

Observations at headquarters

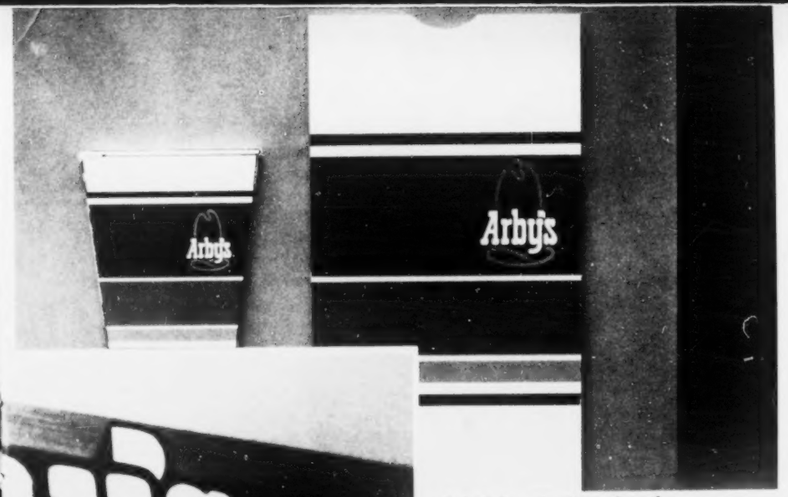
After a couple of weeks on the job at Arby's' headquarters in Atlanta, I quickly made some observations that explained why the company was in a downward spiral. Believe me, I've seen it before: There was little, if any, direction. The organization was stagnating and choking itself with its bureaucratic procedures. People were deathly afraid of making mistakes, deathly afraid of trying new things. The politicians were the "in" group, and the innovators were the outcasts.

People weren't working together as partners or teammates. They were

It is the innovators and risk-takers who breathe new life and new ideas into the soul of a company. To be innovative simply means to be action-oriented, comfortable with taking risks and comfortable in making mistakes.



Arby's' packaging before the turnaround



Arby's' packaging after the turnaround

nothing more than that ugly "E" word—*employees*. Yes, Arby's was asleep, falling deeper and deeper into a comatose state.

Now as I look back at the changes and progress we have made in the last three years, I can't express in words alone how darn proud I am of what this once-dying organization has accomplished.

Yes, we are now breaking all kinds of sales and profit records; but most important, we are truly having fun doing it.

The innovators and risk-takers have become our heroes. Our people are no longer bound by the corporate hierarchy. Communication flows freely between all levels and all departments. We are back to communicating with one another the old-fashioned way—by mouth, eyeball to eyeball, not by memos.

And we moved fast, very fast:

- with new products
- with a new advertising and marketing direction
- with new restaurant design and facilities
- with new signage
- with new packaging
- with new promotions
- with new training programs
- with a new image
- and with a new pride in who we were and where we were headed.

We became a good corporate citizen with our national sponsorship and extensive involvement with the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization.

In fact, our three-year history of posting record sales, profits and new restaurant openings is merely icing on the cake. The turnaround at Arby's goes far beyond the bottom line. It has touched almost every aspect of our business. Arby's has a new culture; a winning spirit. We believe in our concept, our business and our fellow teammates; but, most important, we believe in ourselves.

So what were the key factors responsible for Arby's' turnaround? What did we do to break the shackles of Arby's' stagnation that also has gripped some other large corporations?

1. Identify strengths. I believe a turnaround starts by identifying the strengths of an organization, namely the strengths of its people. And in our business that includes our employees, franchisees and suppliers.

We are successful at motivating our people to succeed when we, as managers, attempt to capitalize on the strengths of each department and each individual. Unfortunately, too often we fog our vision for the future because we spend far too much time focusing on the weaknesses of our people, rather than making our people feel like winners. And making people feel like winners is the very foundation upon which a winning team spirit is built.

2. Build a winning team spirit. Building a winning team spirit is, in my opinion, the most important element of a turnaround.

It's impossible to positively motivate a team that's failing. You have to find and sometimes even create a win. This affords you the opportunity to focus on the winners and not the losers, thereby beginning the process of building and broadening the success of the organization.

So it's imperative that you give your teams attainable goals. Once people taste success, there is nothing that can ever replace that sweet, unforgettable flavor. Give your people that sweet taste of success and then let them know they can have more. This will constantly broaden and raise their sights. In other words, use short-term success to show what the long-term potential can be.

As managers, we need to make sure that our people clearly understand what's expected of them. Keep on top of the small gains and losses—and every day chart your progress. Reminding our people of where we have made our gains is a constant process—you can't do this only occasionally.

And, if you want to be a good "bureaucracy buster," then you have to get rid of the "can't do" mentality. You have to reward your dreamers. You must sacrifice your own priorities in order to share in the priorities of your people.

This sacrifice will create awesome downward loyalty. Soon your people will be looking to reciprocate—not because you asked, but because they want to. And that is really the key—people have to *want* to work hard.

Hug your people. Make *them* the company. Make the company part of their lives; develop a family environment. Don't let your ego get in the way. You shouldn't have the spotlight; you must give your people their turn in the light.

Take your people's advice. Listen, listen, and then do some more listening. Never let your people see you sweat. Laugh with them, cry with them; share in their pain and joy. Be their champion, not their boss.

The net-net of all of this is: Build your team—then rely on your team to do the job. Use their minds, their hearts and their bodies. Let them work to win, not work to merely survive.

Believe me, if you build a good team, you've got yourself a motivated organization. And this organization will die for you and for the company.

3. Open lines of communications. Forget about effecting a turnaround if you don't have open communications among your people. People must feel comfortable discussing the real issues. At Arby's, the culture changed from one where there was fear of communication to one where people are now at ease in expressing their ideas and then taking some chances with those ideas. I believe we have excellent open and direct communication between all layers of our management and throughout the Arby's system. I can't think of a single successful program at Arby's that would have occurred but for our open communications.

4. Encourage innovation and risk-taking. Once we identified the strengths of our organization, built a winning team spirit and opened the lines of communication, then and only then were we able to pave the way for one of the most important factors that contributed to our turnaround—that is, innovation and risk-taking.

As I mentioned before, when I first joined Arby's the Innovators were shunned. They were considered outsiders, and the politicians were the insiders. That had to change, and it did. It is the innovators and risk-takers who breathe new life and new ideas into the soul of a company. Whether we are talking about being innovative with products, advertising, building design, or customer service, to be innovative simply means to be action-oriented, comfortable with taking risks and comfortable in making mistakes.

And talking about making mistakes, Robert Townsend, author of *Up the Organization*, described it well when he said, "to be truly innovative, we need to find ways to make mistakes faster."

Building a winning team spirit is the most important element of a turnaround. If you build a good team, you've got yourself a motivated organization . . . [one that] will die for you and for the company.

The chance of anything new working or succeeding on the first try is one in a million. So the only way to increase your odds of succeeding is to try new things and screw up! The whole key is to learn to make our mistakes faster so we can succeed faster.

We need to try, try, try and try. We need to "try things with an unreasonable conviction based on inadequate evidence"—a great definition of entrepreneurship by Tom Peters, the author of the best-seller *In Search of Excellence*.

As Peters says, "If you don't want to try, try, try, but would rather test, test, test, then that's really saying you want to fail, fail, fail."

Innovation does not come from plans, procedures or planning manuals. It comes from emotion, passion and speed.

Try, try, try, speed, speed, speed—these are synonyms for action, energy, conviction and, most important, the right to fail. There is no question that in a winning and innovative corporate culture, people at all levels need to assume risks and sometimes make tough decisions, relying as much on one's instincts as on anyone's numbers or data.

A great test for determining whether you have an action-oriented or a survival-oriented environment is to observe your accountants and lawyers. If they are smiling with comfort, then you are merely surviving. However, if your accountants and lawyers are choking, sweating and dying every day, then count your blessings—you probably have yourself one heck of an action-oriented, winning environment!

But perhaps the most noticeable characteristic of a winning environment is its people orientation. A winning team will typically be one that gives high priority to listening to its people, its customers, its franchisees and its suppliers. For behind every winning strategy is the keen awareness that change and success come from people, not from machines or piles of paperwork.

The only way to increase your odds of succeeding is to try new things and screw up! The whole key is to learn to make our mistakes faster so we can succeed faster.

5. Build a service culture. If it's the innovators and risk-takers who breathe new life and ideas into the soul of a company, then it is the constant attention to quality that keeps that soul alive.

The most important factor is our ability to deliver what we call "the Arby's promise to our customers"—"The promise to deliver only the best, highest-quality food, served in a clean, friendly and pleasant environment, with speed and efficiency of service."

I know that every one of our major competitors has the same or a similar promise. However, today, more than ever before, how well a restaurant or chain will succeed depends on how well it delivers on its promise to its customers.

To make good on Arby's' promise, we had to strengthen our service to the customer. We had to create a service culture. Well, what is a service culture?

I believe Dr. Karl Albrecht, author of the widely acclaimed book *Service America*, best summarizes what a service culture is: "It's when a company is driven by two and only two groups—those who service the customers directly and those who service someone who does."

Unless shared values, norms, beliefs and ideologies of everyone in an organization are focused on serving the customer, there is practically no chance that the organization can deliver quality service.

The best way to create a service culture is to foster enthusiastic grassroots involvement on the part of all employees and franchisees. The corporate office and, most important, the crew and store manager who are on the front line every day must feel like an integral part of the team.

The Arby's philosophy

At Arby's if there is one philosophy that I pray each day that we all agree on, it is that we are not really in the food business or in the roast beef business. We are first and foremost in the hospitality business! And I believe, particularly in today's highly competitive environment, if you do not recognize this factor or support this basic philosophy, then you are handicapping your own success.

The greatest menu in the world, which I sincerely believe we have in our market segment, is just not enough today. Our customers, whether they admit it or not, want to feel good about their patronage. They want to feel appreciated.

You know, during the last three years, I have received and read hundreds and hundreds of complaining and complimentary letters from our customers. Without exception, what inspired them to write to the president of the company was founded not on whether the food was prepared well, but whether they were treated with dignity and appreciation.

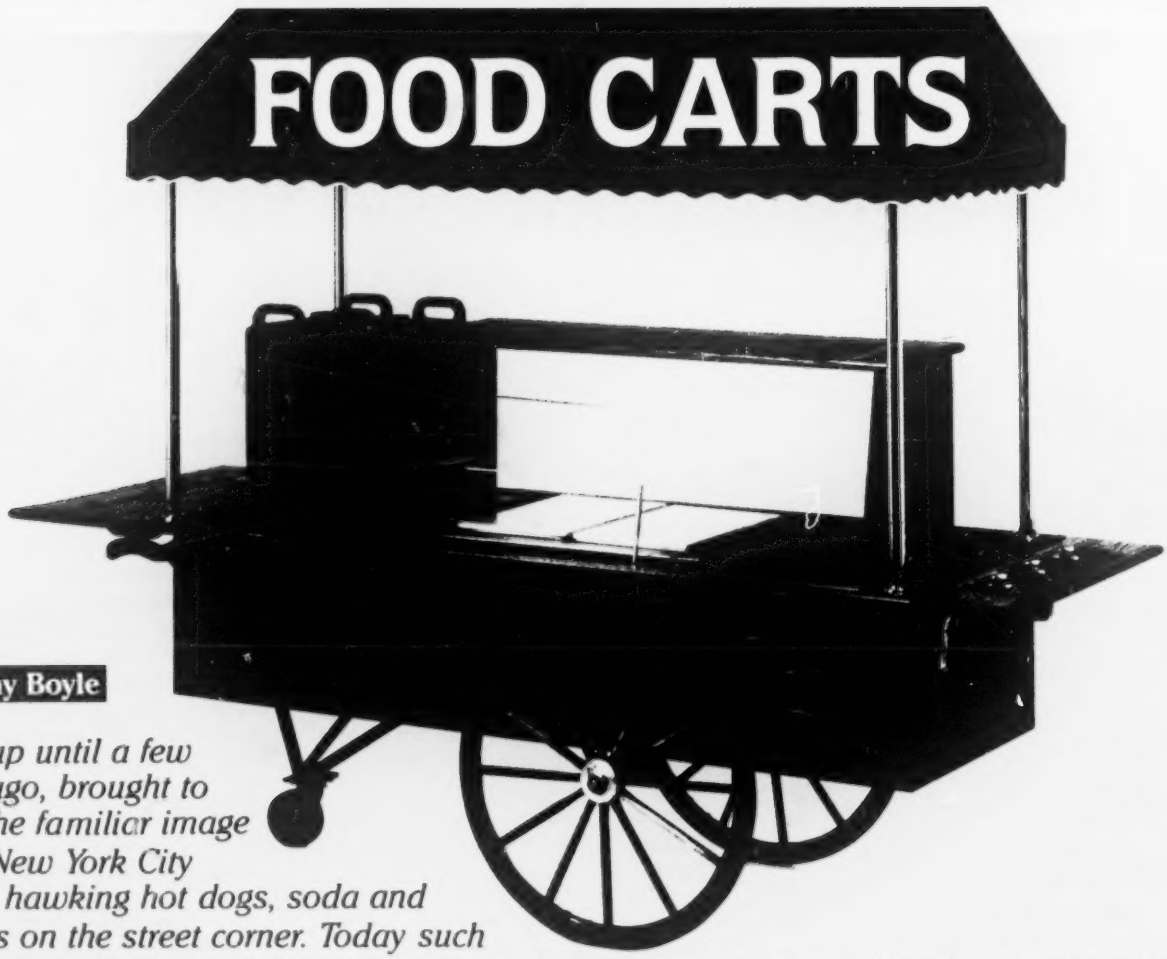
Faith—the secret ingredient

Finally, the secret ingredient—without which there really is no hope of winning—is having that special kind of faith in yourself. And for many people and for many organizations that will turn out to be the problem.

I would like to end with the very same simple message on faith I gave my own people and franchisees during my very first week at Arby's. That message was, and I quote: "Folks, we will always have our doubts together, but we should never allow those doubts to overwhelm that wonderfully naive faith in ourselves that each of us should have. And until we try, we will never know the power we can harness—that we can always do more, much more than we thought we could do—and maybe, just maybe, we just might win beyond all of our wildest dreams."

Best of luck with your dreams. ❑

FOOD CARTS



by Kathy Boyle

Carts, up until a few years ago, brought to mind the familiar image of the New York City vendor hawking hot dogs, soda and pretzels on the street corner. Today such carts are moving beyond the big city. And restaurateurs are not waiting for the customer to arrive. Instead, they are carting the food to the customer.

Carts are moving inside of buildings and malls, sometimes as extensions of already successful restaurants and sometimes as an independent operation. Espresso bars, patio service, salad bars and ice cream stands are some possibilities for carts in foodservice. In addition, some providers are using carts to boost meal-period sales with self-service breakfast and lunch. At Eastman Kodak Company in Rochester, New York, carts are used at eight of its 56 locations. At breakfast, carts offer bagels and cream cheese, donuts, muffins, pastries, yogurt, juices, coffee and tea. At lunchtime, they offer self-serve soups, salads, fruit bowls, sandwiches, pies and cakes. In the late afternoon, pastries, cookies, pies and cakes are merchandised on the carts for employees to take home.

Kathy Boyle is a frequent contributor to ***Restaurants USA.***

Why carts?

Carts are portable and affordable. They can be used individually or grouped together—inside or outside a restaurant—to form a serving station.

Depending on what is added, carts range in price from $2,000 to $20,000—a fraction of the price of a restaurant extension or new location. But the less-expensive models are often designed for cold foods only or for food displays, such as donuts or pastries. At the higher price range, carts have hookups for electricity, stoves and refrigerators.

Expandable (and contractible) restaurants

The Exploratorium Museum in San Francisco attracts 500,000 visitors annually, but for many years it was unable to install a full-fledged foodservice operation because of inadequate sewage and water lines, located nearly a quarter of a mile away. Today it has a thriving business, thanks to carts. Working with a cart manufacturer in San Francisco, the museum recently received final approval from the San Francisco Health Department, and in July 1988 it opened a foodservice operation consisting of six mobile carts.

"Today, we have a functioning restaurant with a chef—David Thomas—formerly of the Faculty Club at the University of California. We change the menu regularly, and we are serving gourmet cuisine from our carts. I would say we are equivalent to any restaurant in San Francisco. And we may do $1 million a year in sales," says Charles C. Carlson, director of operations.

The carts are a particularly well-suited solution to the museum's seasonal business. Forty percent of the visitors come in the summer months, mostly in August. Visitors drop off

Carts range in price from $2,000 to $20,000—a fraction of the price of a restaurant extension or new location.

sharply in September, until school groups start arriving on a regular basis in October and November. Then business is heavy again during the Christmas holidays. Carlson believes the new cart system fits nicely into this erratic traffic flow. "The cart system allows us to expand or contract our foodservice. During the August peak, we use all six carts. But on winter afternoons, when business is slower, we can scale down."

Expanding service

Although the cart solution at the Exploratorium Museum has produced dramatic results, carts are more commonly used to expand an existing operation. Earlier this year, the Red Lion Hotel and Inn in Jantzen Beach, Oregon, began using a new cart with a maroon awning to expand its breakfast service in the hotel's 300-seat coffee shop. "We use the cart for an express breakfast program," says John C. Erickson, formerly assistant manager in charge of food and beverage in Jantzen Beach, now in Eugene. Located in the center of the coffee shop, the cart offers hot-entree items, such as two choices of meats, potatoes, scrambled eggs and a different hot biscuit each day. Cold selections include melons, fresh fruits, juices, cold cereals, yogurt, granola, Danish pastries and bran muffins.

Once in operation, Erickson quickly saw that the cart had potential for more than just breakfast. He put it to use for meeting coffee breaks and lunches. "It relieves the pressure on other outlets in the hotel and provides guests with an extra service," Erickson explains. "For example, we use it to provide a quick lunch for meetings of 800 to 1,000 people. We set it up with sandwiches, potato salad and snacks, and thereby keep people here who might otherwise go off the property to a nearby fast-food outlet."

Not skipping a beat, Erickson comes back with the cart in the evening to serve free hors d'oeuvres from 5 to 7 p.m. in the hotel's lounge. Although Erickson cannot yet assess what the cart has done for sales, he has noted its positive effect on customers: "It provides a great deal of customer satisfaction. They notice it—the speed at breakfast and the convenience at lunchtime, and they tell us about it!"

Multiple uses

Erickson is not the only one to expand his cart program beyond the original intended use. Recently the Pentagon purchased an attractive wooden cart to take the stress off its pastry shop. Andrew Jones, executive secretary for the Department of Defense Concessions Committee, explains: "Each year we bake 2.2 million pastries and donuts in-house. For the overflow of business in the mornings we were using a table outside our pastry shop. It was not very attractive. So when we saw some carts at a recent equipment show, we decided that a cart was a much more logical way to merchandise our pastries."

It was not long after the cart arrived, however, that Jones realized its full potential. "Instead of using the cart in the hallway, we moved it to the center of our cafeteria and began merchandising donuts and pastries. The racks are designed to hold the pastry pans on an angle, so they merchandise the pastries beautifully. And there is a convenient paper-bag rack so customers can bag the items themselves. The cart has become a complete self-service bakery cart, with no added labor costs. Customers simply pay at the cafeteria cashier."

Not stopping with breakfast, Jones now uses the cart to merchandise lunchtime desserts—strawberry and Black Forest sheet cakes. "The all-wood cart is a very appealing addition to our stainless-steel environment," he notes. "With its green canvas awning and wagon wheels, it is a very attractive way to merchandise pastries and cakes. We may be doing $185 to $200 a day in cake sales alone off the cart."

The right cart

Carts come in many different looks—from soft woods to stainless steel—and can include colorful awnings and signs. In fact, many cart companies are custom-designing carts to suit their intended use. The Marriott Corporation, headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, is one company to put a good deal of planning into custom-designing a line of carts.

"We brought in 11 of our operators, who already had used carts, as a task force. These people were a rather sophisticated group and knew what an operator would and would not need in a cart," explains Ruthanne Mefford, director of product marketing in food and services management. This task force looked at very functional things, such as where to put the condiments rack, how to locate the shelves on the cart, how to design overhead cup dispensers and even what types of awnings would best deflect the rain. They even recommended adding a feature not commonly found on carts—a built-in shelf for a cash register. "We have a hinged pull-out shelf built into the cart to fit the cash register. I think we may be one of the few in the business with such a convenience on our carts," Mefford explains.

The result of Marriott's research and planning was to create four distinct cart designs, each suited to a

specific market segment: (1) A wood cart, built of solid oak and oak veneers with brass poles, which can merchandise hot and cold foods in lobbies, interior courtyards, dining rooms or in the hotel's catering operation. (2) A smaller-sized, old-fashioned buggy cart, designed for lower-volume locations or open-air locations, such as high school campus quadrangles, to serve hot dogs, soda and sandwiches. (3) A large, stainless-steel cart that can be outfitted with a post-mix fountain beverage option, a propane or electric stove and a refrigerator. (4) And finally, for those situations where only cold merchandise is to be served, a three-pan iced cart for maximum chilled space and menu versatility.

Similarly, when Sea World of Texas in San Antonio began to plan its foodservice operations 18 months ago prior to opening this past April, it chose to place custom-designed carts in 23 of its 42 foodservice locations. "We are two-and-a-half times the size of Sea World of Orlando," notes Patrick J. Lasich, vice president of foodservice. "With so much walking for the guest, we wanted to cover as much park area as possible, and we thought carts filled our needs." The menu is simple; each cart usually sells one or two items plus beverages. For example, there is a charbroiled hot-dog cart where hot dogs are gas charbroiled on the grill right in front of the customer.

Not labor intensive

In an industry that is desperately seeking employees, are carts overly labor-intensive? No, according to operators who use carts. "As far as labor is concerned, we find our carts to be extremely efficient and very profitable. For example, with our self-service soup, we get the customer to do all the work," quips William C. Lembach, director of foodservice at Eastman Kodak.

Stanley Roth, president of Cart Wheels Mobile Food Services, Inc., in San Francisco agrees: "A buffet cart can take the lines away and is a better utilization of space and staff. Staff can be busy prepping for lunch while the buffet cart serves the latecomers for breakfast."

In addition, one person can attend multiple carts. "In less busy times, we combine several carts with one staffer," explains Lasich. "What is important, however, is to look at the payback on a cart versus a major facility. It is amazing. The payback on a cart may be six to eight months. If you spend $1.5 million on a major restaurant, you will be lucky if your payback is five to seven years."

Although carts may require one person to operate, the employee may not be needed for an entire shift. "We usually borrow someone for a four-hour shift," says Marriott's Mefford. Carts may require some backup from others—a chef to design a menu, a supervisor to check a cart in and out, and maybe someone to stock the cart before the meal period. But a nice feature in using carts is that preparation of items can be done during off-peak times, then brought to the cart location just prior to serving. Also, operators find that many young people like working a cart in the outdoors.

To cut down on training costs, Marriott developed a video program for training cart employees.

Cart merchandising

In addition to capturing a new group of customers, a cart can provide extra advertising for the restaurant. For example, some restaurants use carts for sampling programs. They may tie into a mall event, a fair or an evening at the theatre to sell small amounts of a product for sampling—at a profit. "When a customer samples an item and then asks, 'Where are you located?' you can hand them a walk-away menu to promote your restaurant," notes Roth.

Another way to use carts for advertising is to buy a cart, put your name on it and lend it to civic groups for their events. The restaurant gets both the publicity and the good will.

Getting a cart free

Some food manufacturers offer restaurants free carts as an incentive for selling their products or as a device for advertising. For example, Quincy's at the Aquarium in Seattle, a 200-seat ice cream restaurant, received a free cart for selling enough Dove Bars from Dove Bar International. Currently, Quincy's uses the cart at special events and fundraisers. "When we had 10,000 sailors here for our SeaFeast Festival, we used it out in front of the restaurant on the pier," says manager Shannon Mackay.

Revving up

Because of their flexibility, mobility and relatively low cost, carts are sure to be a restaurant growth booster in the future. ❑

Getting the wheels in motion

When planning a cart program, review potential locations and customer counts carefully.

□ **Location.** "You must be careful to put the cart in an area that will stimulate enough business—a strategic location," says William C. Lembach, director of foodservice at Eastman Kodak Company in Rochester, New York. "The beauty of a cart, however, is that if you make a mistake in assessing the site, you can move it. For example, we moved one cart which was not doing that well to another building, and it did great."

Ruthanne Mefford, director of product marketing in food and service management at the Marriott Corporation, agrees: "Location is everything. At first, our cart here at headquarters [Bethesda, Maryland] was located in the main lobby and did all right; but when we moved it to the employee side-entrance, sales shot up enormously."

□ **Menus.** Operators differ slightly on menu options for carts. Some believe the cart should offer the same menu as the main foodservice operation. Others favor impulse foods. Both can work, depending on how the cart is used. "We suggest that each unit do a customer-preference survey to determine what types of foods customers want and about how much they want to pay," advises Mefford. "In general, we think people want portable, fun foods."

Whatever the selection, operators agree that the food must look good to catch the customer's attention.

□ **Staff.** Several operators note that when choosing an employee to staff a cart, they look closely for good sales skills, politeness and cleanliness.

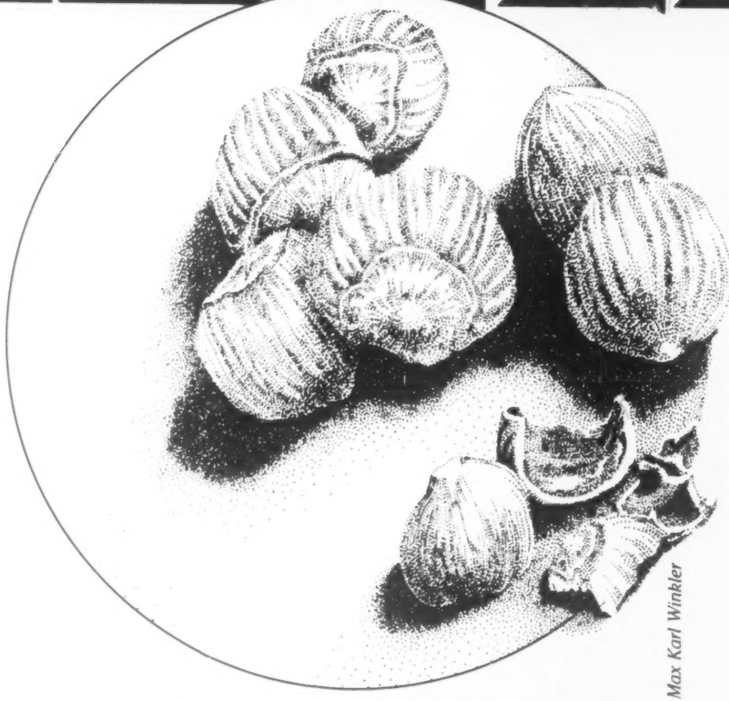
HAZELNUTS

by Claire Regan

Think of it—one nut that can be used to enhance soups, salads, entrees, desserts and even beverages. Sound like a genetically engineered supernut? It's not. It is the hazelnut, whose nutty, full-bodied flavor transforms an ordinary dish into something worth remembering. Chefs are taking advantage of the hazelnut's adaptability to add character to a variety of menu items from rack of lamb (stuffed with greens and hazelnuts) to a savory mushroom-and-hazelnut soup. Hazelnut-grapefruit butter adds zing to fish filets, and a handful of chopped hazelnuts adds flavor and crunch to fruit salad. Hazelnuts are a traditional ingredient in desserts like mousses, tortes and souffles, and they are appearing in fruit cobblers, cheesecakes and ice creams. The rich flavor of hazelnut-flavored coffee makes it hard to believe it is calorie-free. In some regions, hazelnuts are even used as a cocktail condiment, found floating in the likes of gimlets, stingers and black Russians.

Hazelnuts' nomenclature is nearly as versatile as the nut itself. Hazelnuts earned the name of filbert from the French, where the nuts ripen around August 22, Saint Philbert's feast day. Although some authorities claim filbert to be the scientifically correct name of the nut produced by the hazelnut tree, there seems to be no hard-and-fast rule governing this. Adding to the confusion, hazelnuts are called cob-nuts in England.

Hazelnuts were first cultivated in the United States in 1876 by a Frenchman, David Garnot, who planted 50 hazelnut trees in the Willamette River Valley of Oregon because it reminded him of his native Loire. Oregon's mild weather and good soil were conducive to the hazelnut tree's growth,



Max Karl Winkler

A Nutty Marketing Idea

and other plantings followed. Today 98 percent of domestic hazelnuts are produced in Oregon, where 49 of Garnot's 50 original trees reportedly continue to bear nuts. Because their cultivation contributes millions to the state's economy, hazelnuts will soon be proclaimed the official nut of the state of Oregon when the "nut bill" passes in the 1989 state legislative session.

Oregonian hazelnut pride seems contagious. Chef George Poston of Atwater's in Portland (110 seats) reports he likes to use hazelnuts because they are a local product, "plus their flavor is excellent." Poston, who often uses them to make a compound butter, says the rich, warm flavor of hazelnuts lends itself particularly well to entree salads. "I use warm hazelnut-oil-and-vinegar dressing on a sauteed-lamb-and-vegetable salad," he explains. According to Poston, the hazelnut-oil flavor mellows the acidic flavor of wine and vinegar.

Although it is expensive, a little hazelnut oil can go a long way. This flavorful oil is usually used in combination with a blander oil; a few drops provide a flavor complement to chicken salad, sauteed fish, raw vegetable dips and even cookies. Hazelnut oil can be kept in a cool place for six months.

Seattle-based chef Barbara Figueroa (executive chef, Sorrento Hotel) maintains hazelnuts are popular throughout the country. "I use hazelnuts because I like them; I like their flavor," Figueroa simply states. "Hazelnuts are used a good deal in classic French cuisine, and I know they're used quite a bit by New York chefs. Hazelnuts are nothing new. They're fairly universal," she maintains. Figueroa keeps hazelnuts readily available so she and her staff can use them anytime in her "free-floating format." "People like hazelnuts. They're an important ingredient in my wild-mushroom timbale, a custard on demiglasse surrounded by smoked duck breast and garnished with hazelnuts," she explains.

Now is the time to experiment with hazelnuts as they are particularly good with fall and winter salads as well as duck and game preparations. The following suggestions are provided by the Hazelnut Marketing Board in Tigard, Oregon.

□ **Roasted hazelnuts.** For full flavor, always roast your hazelnuts before using them in food preparation! (*Note:* 2 lbs. of in-shell hazelnuts yield about 3 cups of hazelnut kernels.) Spread shelled hazelnuts in a shallow pan and roast in a 275° oven for 20 to 30 minutes, until skins crack. To remove skins, rub nuts while warm with a rough cloth or between your hands. Store in refrigerator or freezer.

Alternatively, you can roast them with butter in a microwave for 3 to 4 minutes, adding about 2 Tbs. of butter for every 3 cups of kernels.

□ **Deep-fried hazelnuts.** Heat oil to 365°. Place raw hazelnuts in a basket and submerge them for 30 seconds or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and dust with salt.

GOURMET HAZELNUT BUTTER

Ingredients:
½ cup butter or margarine
2 tspns. lemon juice
⅓ cup finely chopped Oregon hazelnuts
½ tspn. salt
Dash celery salt
Dash cayenne pepper

Method:
Soften butter or margarine until just workable; add other ingredients and thoroughly blend. Serve at room temperature to top fish, chicken or warm vegetables. Will top six salmon steaks generously.

Recipes are courtesy of the Hazelnut Marketing Board

THREE-PEPPER HAZELNUT SOUP

Serves 12

Ingredients:
1 qt. chicken stock
1 cup lentils
½ cup chopped onions
½ cup chopped carrots
¼ cup chopped celery
2 cloves garlic
½ tspn. coriander
½ tspn. fenugreek
¼ tspn. cumin
2 cups water
1½ cups hazelnuts, toasted and chopped
1 tspn. mixed peppercorns (pink, green and black, cracked)
2 Tbs. (approx.) flour and butter roux to thicken
Salt to taste

Method:
Combine stock, lentils, onions, carrots, celery, garlic, coriander, fenugreek and cumin in a heavy 3-quart soup pot. Bring to boil, reduce heat and simmer 1 hour.

Remove from heat and put through a sieve or puree and return to pot. Add water, hazelnuts and peppers and simmer 15 minutes.

Thicken by beating in roux and cooking an additional 15 minutes. Adjust salt.

Garnish with sour cream, chopped onion or chives, shredded carrots or hazelnuts.

□ **Boiled and pureed hazelnuts.** Boil peeled hazelnuts for 15 minutes in water that just covers nuts. Drain and puree in a food processor or blender. Add cream or stock, if moisture is needed. Season to taste (i.e., garlic salt or nutmeg). Makes an interesting side dish for a fish entree. ❑

HAZELNUT-STUFFED FRENCH BREAD

Yields 2 large loaves

Ingredients:

Filling:
2 garlic cloves, chopped
1 Tbs. Dijon mustard
¾ cup hazelnuts, finely chopped
⅓ cup olive oil
½ cup sun-dried tomatoes, chopped
¼ cup butter, soft
1 cup Swiss cheese, grated

Thoroughly mix all ingredients together and set aside.

Bread:
2 Tbs. dry yeast
2½ cups warm water (105°-115° F.)
7 cups bread flour, unsifted
1 Tbs. salt
1 Tbs. butter, melted

Combine:
1 egg white
1 Tbs. water
Cornmeal for dusting

Method:
Dissolve yeast in warm water. Add bread flour, salt and butter; blend until well mixed. Knead until dough is elastic and smooth—about 10 minutes. Place in greased bowl, cover and let rise until double—about 1 hour. Divide dough into 2 pieces and roll into oblong pieces 15 x 12 inches. Spread each piece with half of filling. Roll up, sealing as you roll. Place seam-side down on greased baking sheets that have been dusted with cornmeal. Let rise until double—about 1 hour. Make 3 or 4 diagonal cuts on each loaf. Bake in preheated 450° oven for 25 minutes. Remove, brush with egg-white-and-water mix; bake 5 minutes more. For best results, keep oven very hot and place a pan with 1 inch of water on the bottom rack. This helps create the classic crunchy crust of good French bread.

Claire Regan, R.D., is manager/staff nutritionist at the National Restaurant Association.

FINISHING

by Joan E. Herlong

At the Hyatt Orlando Javanese shadow puppets add an exotic, intimate touch.

Restaurateurs of all kinds are reaching beyond restaurant supply houses in search of the finishing touches that can add as much to a restaurant's "flavor" as the food on the table. As art consultant Glenn Long affirms, "Any pleasant surrounding should have real art in it. It adds to the ambiance. When I go into a restaurant and see the quality of what's on the walls, I think that's a good indication of the quality of the menu."

Finding the centerpieces

Art for its own sake is not enough, however. Finding the "right" pieces is the challenge. A genuine Sicilian ponycart, for example, is a masterpiece in its own right, but it cannot "work" just anywhere. It must be consistent with the tone and feeling of the restaurant. At Antonino's Ristorante del Carretto in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, however, it strikes the perfect chord—standing as the literal centerpiece of the restaurant, just as it is "the backbone of the Sicilian culture" in which owner Antonino Lopiparo was raised.

Even newcomers unschooled in Italian immediately divine the meaning of "del Carretto." The entire motif revolves around the craftsmanship of the ponycart.

As the restaurant's menu cover explains in detail, Lopiparo first pulled a ponycart as a small boy selling fruits and vegetables to help support seven younger siblings. Giovanni AlComado, a master cart builder, repaired Lopiparo's decrepit cart many times. As a gesture of his faith in Lopiparo's potential, AlComado saved the last cart he ever made—in 1959—and gave it to Lopiparo in 1963. A few years later, Lopiparo had every square inch of the cart painted by the Ducati Brothers, whose worldwide reputation led to a profile in *National Geographic*. Lopiparo began collecting as many ponycarts and Ducati paintings as possible in anticipation of someday opening a Sicilian restaurant in America. In 1981, he and his family opened a small pizzeria, which expanded three years later to Antonino's Ristorante del Carretto.

There are four authentic ponycarts in the restaurant, sides of dismantled ponycarts, plus scores of paintings by the Ducati Brothers. The painting scenes are

Joan E. Herlong is a freelance writer in Arlington, Virginia.

TOUCHES

classic ponycart decorations such as romances, battle scenes, folklore and tableaux of the saints.

General manager and son Joseph Lopiparo points out that the *carretto* centerpiece lends the restaurant a truly Sicilian feeling. With the other Italian artifacts on display—pottery, tiles and marionettes—"people say they feel like they've walked into a little corner of Italy," he says.

Senior Lopiparo is especially proud of his collection because, as he says, "Nobody makes the carts anymore. The craft has almost died out." Lopiparo's carts can be seen in city parades and other local events, building recognition for the restaurant in the community.

The Potomac Room's intricate shadow boxes draw customer attention.

Highlighting family talent

The Potomac Room of the Ritz Carlton in Washington, DC, displays a marvelous collection of shadow boxes that echoes the room's turn-of-the-century-club-like comfort. Flanking the formal fireplace, set as the focal point of the room, are 12 finely appointed shadow boxes, like so many miniature dollhouses perched on the walls. Each one depicts a different scene, such as a French sidewalk cafe, a milliner's shop, and a customer favorite—a general store. Like the Potomac Room itself, panelled throughout in beautifully finished 18th-century South Carolina pine, the shadow boxes are a study in detail. Tiny Civil War photographs hang on the walls of the Victorian parlor scene, genuine oil portraits grace the grand ballroom, miniature labels describe all the usual sundries crowded into the general store and dolls or clothed dogs appear in amusingly human postures. A furtive little mouse also lurks in each box, adding a touch of whimsy to the collection.

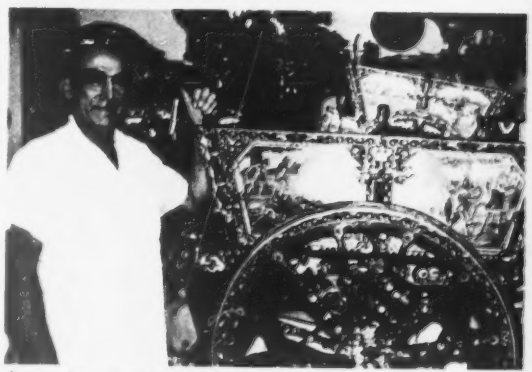
"The collection is the focal point in the Potomac Room," says Vivian Deuschel, director of public relations. "The boxes are very popular, generating a lot of interest and curiosity."

The shadow boxes look as though they date back to the 19th century. However, they are only 10 years old. "The collection belongs to the family of the owner of the Ritz Carlton, John Coleman. His aunt made them in 1978, although they appear to be antique," says Deuschel.

A commissioned showpiece

When Trotter's barbecue restaurant in Springfield, Missouri, remodeled about a year and a half ago, owner Steve Trotter seized the opportunity to do something "new and different" for the restaurant. He sought an updated, modern look, but wanted to maintain the established Trotter's logo of horses and horse racing. Trotter noticed a striking tiled mural in a California bank while vacationing and decided he had found just the thing.

The showpiece of the restaurant now is a relief wall mosaic by artist El Terry Leonard. The mural scene extends the length of the main dining room, about 50 feet, and is done in tiles of varying sizes and depths, some as large as 4 x 5 inches, some quite small. The mosaic depicts "a classic country horse-racing scene, which had already been on our menu covers before remodeling," says Trotter. "People like it real well," he continues; "we get a lot of customer response and actual inquiries about the artist who did it. We're really pleased with the mural because it allowed us to take just a 'Plain Jane' wall and make it into something that adds a lot of interest to the restaurant. Before we remodeled, this was just your typical rustic barbecue restaurant. If we expand, we would like to incorporate the mural into future franchises."



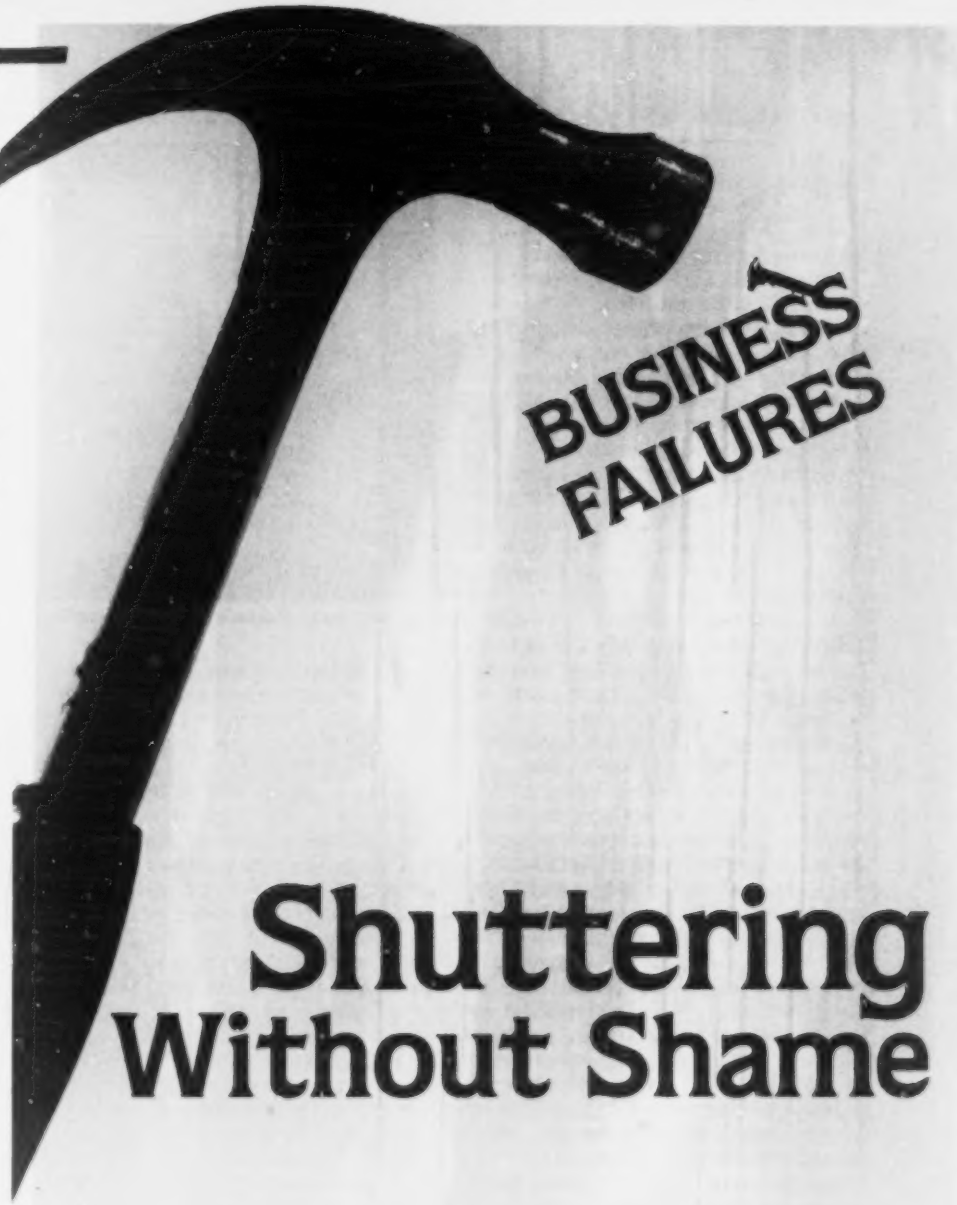
Antonino Lopiparo is very proud of his ponycart collection.

An exotic, intimate touch

At the Hyatt Orlando in Kissimmee, Florida, the art collection adds an exotic, intimate touch. On the lobby level, guests are greeted by an unusual art collection that includes Javanese shadow puppets, Afghanistan tent decorations and Indonesian textiles. The pieces—as small as a child's cap and as large as a bolt of fabric—add texture, color and an international flavor to the otherwise modern, open structure.

Following in-depth marketing research, the art was purchased and assembled for the hotel by Bernice Greenberg of Art Resources, Ltd. In her research Greenberg took into consideration the proximity of the hotel to Walt Disney World and Epcot Center and the guests who visited the hotel. Her selection of the Javanese shadow puppets corresponds to the fantasy and the whimsical aspect of Walt Disney World, and the other artifacts represent the international scope of the Epcot World Showcase.

Perhaps the most intriguing pieces in the folklore collection are the 17 antique puppets, which are more than 100 years old. The Wayang Kulits—Javanese puppets—are made of leather that has been flattened and treated. The original cutting and painting of the figures demands great skill and takes months to complete. Each detail symbolizes an aspect of character, personality or status, such as the shape of eye, nose, adornment, headdress, etc. The smaller and more delicate the figure, the higher the status. Fascinating as the puppets are, they are more than unusual decorative pieces, more than works of art. In Java, this Wayang tradition still commands deep emotional and intellectual adherence and provides the modern Javanese with an understanding of their relationship to the natural and the supernatural order. In the Hyatt Orlando, with its open-air ambiance, they add warmth, depth and an intimate presence. ❑



BUSINESS FAILURES

Shuttering Without Shame

"I probably learned more from closing one restaurant than I have from all my successful ones," says Jim Errant, who closed his restaurant Jason's in 1983. Errant now owns and operates five restaurants in the Chicago area.

"Psychologically, a restaurant that's failing can really bring you down," says Errant. "It's rough on your home and your business—you start losing confidence in your decisions. It was especially tough to close Jason's because my family was telling me, 'No, keep it going.' That's strong pressure, but I just finally had to say, 'No, it's time to close it.' "

Jason's was initially a successful restaurant that was something of a spin-off from Errant's prosperous Chicago Claim Company. But in spite of Jason's popularity, Errant was never quite comfortable with its decor and feel. Errant asked the designer to revamp the place, and he changed Jason's to look more upscale. Business dropped off almost immediately. At that point, Errant stepped in. He dropped the designer, took a hard look at the operation and decided that closing Jason's was the best option. "I was living someone else's ambiance with that restaurant," says Errant. "We were fortunate that we could afford to close Jason's—we had other restaurants going. Sometimes it gets to where you don't want to throw any more money into something you don't believe in."

It's part of the business

Failure is not uncommon in the restaurant business—or in any small business. With a high number of variables involved in the production, sales and service of food, there are plenty of ways to go wrong. Added to these variables is the fact that restaurants are cash-flow businesses, dependent on daily receipts to finance continuing operation. If not properly financed from the outset, a restaurant may not be able to wade through the initial stage of a restaurant's life cycle: building a customer base.

But how do restaurant operators know whether they are experiencing a brief downturn in sales or whether they have a declining operation on their hands? "A good sales and marketing analysis will tell you if your problem is day-specific, market-specific or season-specific," says Don Winter of Winter and Associates, a hospitality industry consulting firm in Sausalito, California. With that analysis in hand, a restaurateur should be able to determine whether or not it is time to shut down.

Restaurateur Jim Errant, however, thinks the signs of impending doom should be obvious. "You have to know your business," says Errant. "Unfortunately, a lot of people don't

Paul Mootman is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

know their business, and they don't know which mistakes are hurting them. The best way to find out what mistakes are being made is to talk to your customers. I've never been in a situation in which I didn't know the reason for a downturn."

Sometimes you have to read between the lines, however, rather than just listening to what people say. If a regular customer used to give rave reviews of the food and now says only that it was okay, that customer has let you know he was disappointed.

Not understanding an operation's problems is often the result of a hands-off management style in which a restaurateur loses touch with customers and employees. "Absentee management in the restaurant business usually isn't wonderful," says Marilyn Wayne of Wayne and Associates, a business brokerage firm in Falls Church, Virginia. "There are too many variables involved for you to let someone else take care of it all. It's a cash-flow business; so if you don't count your money every day, you don't know what you have. And there are so many perishables. It's not like an inventory business in which you have 12 screwdrivers, and if you sell four, there are eight left."

You have to ask

"Listen to your employees," says Gary Jones of Petrinovich, Pugh and Jones, an accounting firm in San Jose, California. Jones is a frequent consultant to restaurants in California's Silicon Valley region. "Do a survey," he says. "Either have employees fill out a written survey or call them in and form committees to discuss the operation. Employees often know more than they tell you. You have to ask." Employees may have friends and family who dine in the restaurant and give honest feedback about the food or the service. Yet employees may feel that it is not their role to tell the restaurateur how to run the business—unless they are asked.

Jones has witnessed numerous bankruptcies recently in Santa Clara County—a fact he attributes in part to declining liquor sales. No matter what the reason, the symptoms are usually similar. "A downtrend in sales, your creditors are after you, you're being converted to C.O.D. from credit, your accounts payable are aging—these are all signs of a failing operation," says Jones. "It's like a disease. There are early warning signs, but restaurateurs are so busy they sometimes miss the obvious."

Even restaurateurs who see the writing on the wall will sometimes deny that their operation is failing. "We get a lot of resistance from some of our clients," says Jones. "They say, 'It's just seasonal.' Seasons in the restaurant business don't last that long. That's another signal of a failing operation: You're not coming out of a seasonal downturn, and your competitors are."

Whatever the reason for the tailspin of an operation, Jones warns not to get behind on tax payments. "I have one piece of advice for owners of a declining operation: Do not put off payment of payroll tax or sales tax. Too many restaurateurs finance their declining operations with money that should be set aside for taxes. "The tax people may be the last ones to knock on your door," says Jones, "but they knock the loudest."

The last straw

Many restaurateurs make the decision to close their businesses when they are hit with a new lease that calls for a substantial rent increase. This is often the last straw when a restaurant operator has been considering closing an operation. Clive DuVall recently shut down his Houston restaurant Tila's when he foresaw declining profitability in light of a substantial rent increase. "My lease was up, and the renewal rate was much higher and for a much longer term than before," says DuVall. "And I was in an area I no longer wanted to be in—an area of Houston that had gone bad." DuVall now feels more comfortable with a Tila's he opened in Chevy Chase, Maryland, a Washington, DC, suburb he describes as the "Rodeo Drive of Washington."

Making an exit

Is there a way to salvage more than the value of the pots and pans in getting out of the business? Maybe. But if you've already closed your operation, it may be tough to find a buyer willing to pay more than the price of your property and equipment.

"Most sellers don't get the price they'd like for a restaurant," says Marilyn Wayne. "Buyers are looking for a bargain they can turn around."

Gary Jones recommends that a restaurateur looking to sell an operation try to maintain the appearance of success. "If buyers smell that you're in trouble," says Jones, "they'll really seek a bargain price. So keep your problem quiet to the general public. I know a client—he was very well off—who was able to keep the appearance of strength at his failing operation. And he was able to wait and secure a good sale price for it.

"Once buyers have smelled blood, you're in trouble. Selling a restaurant is not like selling real estate or a home. There are a limited number of buyers."

Whatever your reasons for leaving a restaurant behind, there are several ways of getting out of the business. If you lease your location and the lease is up, you can simply hang out the "CLOSED" sign and walk away—your only responsibility would be disposing of the restaurant's assets and paying any outstanding liabilities.

If you own the property your restaurant sits on, you have the option of selling your property as a restaurant business as opposed to selling it as just real estate. "The whole is greater than its parts," says Wayne. "If you have a kitchen and a lease, then that is worth something." If the location is good, it might be worth a great deal to a buyer comparing it to the cost of building a restaurant from the ground up, since the number of prime sites that don't already have some kind of building on them is extremely small. "For that reason alone, conversions are becoming more and more typical in the restaurant industry," notes Steven Brown of Alex Brown and Sons, an investment firm in Baltimore, Maryland.

A clean getaway

The majority of people closing an operation, however, are tenant restaurateurs who have no concept to sell—just plates, pans and prep tables. Restaurateur John Grisanti, who recently closed his Grisanti's restaurant in

Memphis before starting up a new project, has some simple advice for those in the wake of a restaurant failure: Make a quick, clean getaway. "After we closed Grisanti's, the landlords wanted us to get the stuff out of there immediately. My advice is to get [your equipment] to an auction as soon as you can, sell it for what you can get and chalk it up to experience. Don't do what I did. I put it in storage, paid a couple hundred dollars a month for that, and the equipment isn't getting any more valuable." Unfortunately, auctioneers explain, used restaurant equipment goes for about "a dime on the dollar."

Like many others who have closed restaurants, John Grisanti believes that his decision to do so was a good one. "When you work hard and don't see any profit at the end of the month, that's tough," says Grisanti. "We struggled with it for three years. It wasn't losing a lot, but it wasn't making a lot. So after two years, we started making plans for another place."

Grisanti quickly opened a new restaurant, Peter K's, that he thinks has a much brighter future. "The new place is in town, and it's a seven-days-a-week, lunch-and-dinner restaurant, whereas the old place was dinner-only, six days a week. We were a little ahead of our time at the old location. That neighborhood is still a few years away," says Grisanti, referring to the shuttered site in suburban Memphis.

In closing

Shuttering a restaurant may not be as gloomy a task as expected. Instead, it should be seen as a part of doing business in the volatile restaurant industry. And it can lead to better things. "I'm that much stronger for the mistakes I've made," says Jim Errant. "After the closing, I put more responsibility back in my hands so I'd have no one to blame but myself. Just to have it [a failed restaurant] behind you is a great feeling. You know, you have to know when you're doing something right, but you also have to know when you're doing something wrong. If you think you should never make a mistake, that's when you won't admit one." ❑

Reflections on Staying on Top

There is no one formula for success in the restaurant business, but there are key points to keep in mind if you want your restaurant to be more than an overnight toast of the town.

Don't expect to dine at New York's Caffe Roma or Baton's; Chicago's Dixie Bar and Grill or Cucina, Cucina; San Francisco's Anabelle's or Restaurant 101; or Denver's French Quarters. All of these restaurants, once darlings of the glitterati, have shuttered.

Like meteorites, which speed through the air, dazzle our eyes and then vaporize into nothingness, these trendy restaurants—often opened to considerable fanfare—are initially filled to capacity by the "beautiful people," and then, as quickly as cash-flow problems arise, fade from the scene.

Many trendy restaurants manage to survive, of course, and some become hallmarks of excellence. Just what makes the difference between success and failure is often difficult to describe, but here are some points to consider.

1. Diversify your appeal to several markets. One group of customers will not sustain business over the long haul. When Piero Selvaggio first opened Valentino's in Los Angeles in 1972, the Hollywood set flocked to his restaurant to dine on his authentic Italian food. But he learned fast that to meet his expenses he would have to appeal to a broader market than just the film crowd. Through word-of-mouth recommendations and advertisements, Selvaggio started drawing conventioneers and locals to diversify Valentino's appeal.

At the Sardine Factory in Monterey, California, co-owner Ted Balestreri says that his restaurant's success also comes from a mix of customers—a strong local following combined with the many tourists who come to Cannery Row. And at Jasper's in Boston, owner Jasper White says that the $60-per-person dinner fosters an older, upscale audience at his eatery. But he has marketed Jasper's as the place to go in Boston for a celebration. As a result, each night anniversaries and birthdays are celebrated at Jasper's.

2. Serve a quality product. Food is often the driving force behind a thriving restaurant—whether it's an intricate five-course meal or a spectacular single offering. Top restaurants usually go that extra mile to find quality ingredients. Some contract with farmers to grow meats, produce or fresh herbs or buy into a fishing company to ensure a supply of absolutely fresh seafood. Others purchase special equipment to smoke meat, or make pasta on the premises or bring extra staff on board to produce signature chutneys, pastas, flavored vinegars or baked goods.

"Never cheat on merchandise. Always buy the best you can," says Andre Soltner, chef-owner of New York's Lutece. "We are here to give enjoyment, and you just cannot do that with second-rate food."

3. Offer value for the price. A deliberate emphasis on value and substance can help a restaurant find—and keep—its niche. Henry Dinardo, chef/owner of Windows in Arlington, Virginia, maintains that a focus on value has contributed to his restaurant's success.

"When we opened, we knew there was a slight slump in the market for fine food—customers were resisting the high cost," he says. "So we set our prices somewhat lower than other restaurants serving comparable food. Instead of salmon and lobster in a painstaking nouvelle presentation, our customers get larger portions, arranged simply."

"If people think, 'I had to pay so much it wasn't worth it,' they won't return," declares John Buchanan, managing partner of Hat Dance, a Lettuce Entertain You restaurant in Chicago, and a veteran of 18 years in the restaurant business. That goes for investment bankers making $400,000

a year or forklift operators making $4 an hour. "Everyone wants value for their money."

4. Provide a personal touch. People may go to top restaurants for the food they have heard about, but they are likely to return for the warm welcome and competent service they are confident of finding there.

"Our strength is the personal relationship . . . [that's something] you cannot buy," says Soltner. "It is always difficult to fight against people who have more money than you have. But big money doesn't need a personal touch."

Other operators agree that service is the cutting edge of success or failure. Lee Friedman, managing partner of Melrose in New York and formerly with Baton's, is an avid believer in personal attention.

Friedman says he has learned from Baton's' miscues. After Baton's came to be known as the place where Manhattan's elite dined, its owners moved on, causing its trendy clientele to feel unrecognized. A host or hostess, who changed weekly, would greet patrons with, "Do you have a reservation?" instead of "How are you doing tonight, Calvin Klein?"

Recognizing customers and giving them special attention is one of the main reasons why customers become your steady clientele, suggests Friedman. "I know what my regulars eat, where they want to sit, and if they order tuna each night. I have one customer who dines every Thursday night at 10:30 and orders salmon. We know how he likes it prepared."

5. Create a sense of belonging. "Unfortunately, these days, restaurant critics tend to disregard everything except the food in front of the guest," says restaurant consultant George Lang (New York City). "That's the most important thing, no question about it. But the decor, the light level, the noise level—whether it's as quiet as in a church, or as noisy as a pandemonium in a Western when the cattle get loose—have to be just right for the particular place. Everything should reinforce a sense of belonging."

6. Develop a team. Even the most appealing atmosphere or attentive owner won't attract customers if the busboys are surly, the hostess nasty and the waiter uninformed. You need a caring, informed team. "One of the keys to surviving is to forge a family out of the staff—from the managers down to the busboys—because without this, there is not a chance you can force or control them to offer full-time hospitality," says Lang.

Other restaurant insiders contend that training one's staff—managers and servers—can make the difference between having a restaurant last for 10 years or for only one year. That's why Jasper White holds daily half-hour conferences with all waiters, reviewing the day's menu, new wines and service rules. "The staff," White says, "get quizzed. If they don't know the menu, they don't work here."

Selvaggio of Valentino's uses the personal approach to train his staff to offer sensitive service and anticipate customers' needs. New waiters "follow me, ask questions, observe me" and learn his style, he says. This personalized approach helps to inspire peak performance.

7. Create a solid foundation. There is no substitute for a well-run operation, and a good management system begins even before the doors open. "The restaurant that has a chance to survive is the one that does not happen casually," says Lang. "The formula you create has to be such that on the day you open you have a break-even point. Even then, the chances of making it are very hazardous, but at least you are reducing the likelihood of failure."

Undercapitalization, agrees Buchanan of Hat Dance, is one of the main reasons why trendy restaurants sizzle and then collapse. "If you want to have everything going for you in terms of location, decor and proper equipment that won't break down, you may have to spend money up front. Restaurants often do business for a short while, and then when the novelty wears off, sales slip." Buchanan asserts that many restaurants fail because their owners "do not know how to control costs and operate a business effectively."

Today, with competition increasing, business skills are more important than ever before. Fortunately, computers have contributed significantly to back-office sophistication. Every cost, every price, everything that has to do with the business side of a restaurant can be recorded and summarized quickly to stay abreast of the business. (See computer story in this issue.)

8. Plan for change. To stay successful, the top restaurants have to be fast on their feet. "Change is the secret of longevity. Without it, the great restaurants of today will become the mediocre restaurants of tomorrow," says Ted Balestreri. Yet it's hard to keep the high level of energy, of excitement, in running a restaurant year after year. At Denver's Rattlesnake Club, co-owner and chef Jimmy Schmidt watches over his restaurant 12 hours a day, often six or seven days a week, "to recognize regular patrons, to make sure they're well taken care of and to constantly discover what patrons want." In fact, the menu changes regularly. New sauces are tried to invigorate dishes; presentations are changed to give dishes a new look.

Food is not the only thing that changes. In fact, decor can often become outdated before the menu does. Even nationally acclaimed establishments don't rest on their laurels. Lutece, Valentino's and Jasper's have all had facelifts in the last year or two to give them a more up-to-date look. "The stage is important," says Valentino's Selvaggio.

9. Stay involved. Undeniably, the great restaurants add up to more than their food, hospitality and location: It's that indefinable thing called "spirit." The great restaurants have always been a strong personal statement by one or two people. "To stay on top you have to be very serious about the business," says Andre Soltner. "You created this business. It's your image, and you have to make it go. You cannot hire somebody to replace you. That is the secret."

When it's all said and done, cites Balestreri, there's more than food, atmosphere and service that keeps a restaurant going. Love is the final ingredient in the mix. "You gotta love your restaurant," he says. "Every day, you gotta love it, treat it like your only child, nurture it, watch it, keep it clean, keep it exciting and healthy, but keep it uniquely yours." ❑

Be Gentle, It's My First PC!

by William C. Schwartz

The first-time buyer's guide to personal computers

The time has come. You've been putting off the decision to buy a personal computer (PC) for your operation for a long time, but you can't avoid it any longer. Everywhere you look, people are using PCs—your suppliers, your friends, your neighbor's kids and your competitors. You're surrounded.

Even the language on the street is confusing. You used to think that a "hard drive" involved dirt roads or that "ram" meant a male sheep. And "bugs" were what you paid the exterminator to kill, while "hardware" was for building and fixing things. As Alice in Wonderland said, things just seem to get "curiouser and curiouser."

Not being the type to let mass confusion slow you down (after all, you run a foodservice operation), you refuse to be intimidated any longer. So you've decided to jump on the bandwagon, catch the wave, dive in and get with some "programs." Still, deep down, uncertainty and fear of the unknown linger. Every now and then—for just a "nanosecond"—you wonder: "Will I buy the wrong thing? Will it do what I want? Will I spend too much? Will I 'byte' off more than I can chew? What if I get with the wrong program?"

William C. Schwartz is president of Systems Concepts, Inc., a national consulting firm in Scottsdale, Arizona, specializing in food cost management and providing consultation on software products. Schwartz was a presenter at the association's National Conference on Computers in Foodservice last spring and teaches the food cost management seminar for the association's educational foundation.

It doesn't take a "megabyte of memory" to realize that knowledge is the key to success when considering a computer purchase. And you don't need to know everything about computers to make a smart decision. There are people who make a living selling computers who know next to nothing about them! All it takes is a "basic" understanding, some running around and a checkbook or credit card. And in a few "clock ticks," you can join the ranks of the more than 16 million personal computer users.

Max Karl Winkler

Getting a handle on hardware

Simply stated in foodservice terms, a computer system eats information (input), briefly chews on it (processing), and either spits it out (output) or keeps it down (storage) for later use. And there you have it. From that basic level, we can now proceed to actually naming the components.

Everyone knows what input means. Usually this is done with a keyboard, but you may have noticed some people talking to their computers. Although this practice may have some psychologically redeeming value, the computer doesn't listen (but the day may come).

The processor is the real workhorse of the computer. Think of it as a general manager in chip form. It is involved in everything the computer does. It directs traffic between input, output and storage functions; it does all the math, and it follows instructions—lots of instructions.

The processor is somewhat finicky, in that it will only deal with data handed to it on a silver platter. That silver platter is called RAM (random access memory). Think of RAM as you would think of your own memory, only in chip form. All information (data) must be placed in memory before it can be used. As a result, all computer systems must have RAM.

One reason RAM is necessary has to do with speed. For humans, it is much faster to recall a memorized phone number than to look it up in a phone book. The same goes for computers. The processor can retrieve data much more quickly from RAM than from any other type of storage device. In fact, without RAM, computers would be real yawners.

But there is at least one piece of bad news. When the power is turned off, everything stored in RAM is erased (which is why they call it temporary storage). And as if that weren't bad enough, RAM is the most expensive type of memory you can buy.

Magnetic disk and tape are the most common means of permanent

storage. Found in all shapes and sizes, they have a magnetic film coating that can be written "to" or read by disk or tape drives, machines that generally drive in circles at a high speed. Tape is usually used only for backup purposes, as a form of insurance. Data is permanently written onto the disk or tape by a magnetic head similar to those used in cassette recorders.

Of course, the data written to disks or tape can be lost by physically damaging the disk or tape (hand it to any two-year-old), by passing a magnet close to it (scrambled data), or by simply writing over the data with some different data. The only protection against these high crimes is a recent backup, usually on tape.

No computer would be complete without some way for us humans to see what is going on. It would be helpful to be able to see what we type, what the computer does with it, and maybe even some pretty pictures from time to time. We would say that we need to monitor the computer, since we never believe what we can't see.

Well, in order to monitor, you'll need a monitor. There are a variety of names for monitors, like CRT (cathode-ray tube), screen and tube. Regardless of what they're called, monitors come in various shapes, sizes, colors and price ranges, and look like small TV sets without channels or remote control. They don't need channels because they have cable. Not the home-viewing variety, but a cable that runs from the monitor to the computer.

Finally, you will need to get information out of the computer and onto paper. The printed data can then be stacked in huge piles on a desk, hung from the walls or delegated to the circular files. The two computer terms for printed matter are printout and hard copy, neither of which makes any particular sense, since very few people do their printing outside, and most documents are easy to copy.

It's decision time

It would be much easier to make decisions if we didn't have any choices. Unfortunately, that is not the case with computers. To ease the burden slightly, I am providing some recommendations (called *Author's Choice*), which you may want to consider.

□ **Apple or IBM—pledge allegiance.** Assuming only one person will be using the computer at a time (single user) and depending on the software you select, you will be forced into one of two basic computer worlds. Your software will specify either Apple or IBM compatibility.

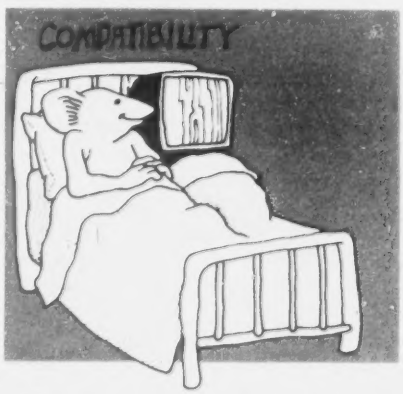
The Apple world is a dictatorship controlled by Apple Computer, Inc., manufacturer of Apple and Macintosh computers, among other things. The people who live in the Apple world are devoted followers, especially those who use Macintosh ("Mac"—absolutely no relation to the golden arches). You should never try to convince a Mac owner that any other computer could be as good or better. It is an exercise in futility. You will also notice that most Mac users can be frequently seen pushing a mouse around on the table while they work at their computers!

While the Apple world is a dictatorship, the dictator is perhaps the most creative and advanced in the world. Apple was introduced long before IBM's PC, and Apple computers are much easier to use for people new to computers. For this reason, Apple has successfully achieved dominion over the elementary schools of America.

The Macintosh spawned a revolution in user-friendly computer design with its ease of use and high-quality, graphics-oriented (pictures-on-the-screen-instead-of-words) approach. The IBM world is only now beginning to acknowledge the superior design of the Macintosh/user interface.

On a more negative note, Apple has been unable to convince the majority of software manufacturers to write software for its equipment. As a result, the software available to run on the Apple is quite limited, compared to that of the IBM world. This becomes especially apparent when looking for foodservice software.

The IBM world is a democracy, and though it is not controlled by any single company, you would have to consider IBM a superpower. As you know, superpowers have a habit of forcing others to do things their way. When IBM introduced the PC, the company effectively set new standards for the industry, both in hardware design and, perhaps more importantly, in operating system software. In a move that made Bill Gates a multimillionaire and Microsoft a major company, IBM combined efforts with Microsoft to produce MS-DOS (aka PC-DOS), the software that operates the PC.

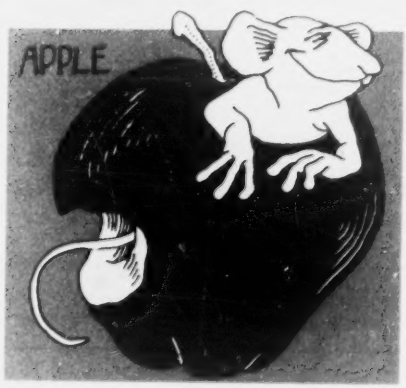


Companies around the world started to follow IBM's lead, building computers that looked like the PC and were operated by MS-DOS (MS stands for Microsoft, and DOS stands for disk operating system). The result was the ability to buy software that would run on hundreds of different manufacturers' computers—not just one. The word compatible took on a new meaning, indicating that the machine you were considering would run software developed for the IBM PC.

Thousands of companies began developing both hardware and software that could run in the IBM world. Included in this plethora of new products are software packages for restaurants, hotels, institutions and other foodservice environments. IBM-compatible product lines continue to improve and expand.

In fact, much to the dismay of IBM,

a whole new race of computers called IBM clones have found their way into the marketplace, sporting similar or improved capabilities, complete compatibility and prices as much as one-third lower than the brand-name systems (clones usually don't have recognizable brand names). Clones are quite popular among the more knowledgeable computer users.



Author's Choice: The IBM world—because it has more foodservice software, more hardware choices, and a wide range of prices.

□ **Process this!** I don't care who makes it, what they call it or how it looks, there are only three kinds of personal computers in the IBM world. There are slow ones, medium-speed ones and fast ones. You can easily tell which one you are looking at by asking one simple question: "What is the model number of the Intel processor in this computer?" Intel is the company that manufactures the actual computer-processor chip found in most PCs. All you need to know is which Intel processor the machine uses to determine the relative speed of the computer. Luckily, there are only three model numbers to consider:

Model number	Speed
8088	slow
80286	much faster
80386	blinding speed

Most PC processors are rated in megahertz (MHz), which is a frequency measure dealing with electronic cycles. One MHz would be equal to one million electronic cycles per second. Now isn't that special!

The slowest processor is the 8088. Introduced with the first PCs, this chip operated at speeds of almost 5 MHz. Since then, the speed has been increased through various schemes, and the resulting systems usually have the word turbo in the title. Regardless of how much they increase the speed of the chip, the processor can only deal with groups of eight ones and zeros (bits) at a time.

The middle-of-the-road processor is the 80286, called the 286 for short (makes sense). This chip was used in the IBM-AT computer, and ever since then, computer folks have called computers with 286 processors "AT-Class" systems. The 286 runs between 8 and 12 MHz, depending on the computer, and manipulates 16 bits at a time. For most applications, this translates to four or five times the speed of the 8088 chips!

The fastest processor on the market today is the 80386, or 386 for short. This chip handles 32 bits at a time and runs at speeds between 16 and 25 MHz. Simply stated, this chip is current state of the art. It easily handles multiple users simultaneously, can be stocked with more RAM, and generally operates at least two or three times faster than the 80286. It also happens to be the most expensive. This processor would be most useful in a network environment (many PCs tied together). It is required by some multi-user systems.

Author's Choice: The 80286. It's the best all-around processor for the money.

□ **The RAM decision.** This one is easy. The maximum amount of RAM usable by MS-DOS is 640K (the K is short for kilobytes). In case you were wondering, 1 kilobyte is equal to approximately 1,000 bytes (the actual number is 1,024 bytes, but who's counting?). You can think of a byte as the amount of memory needed to store one alphabetic character. Therefore 640K would be the memory required to store 640,000 characters. Any system you buy these days should have at least 640K, since many of the better software packages won't run with less, and many that can run with less run better with 640K. All computers come stocked with some amount of RAM.

Author's Choice: 640K.

□ **Dealing with disks.** As mentioned previously, disk drives are used for permanent storage. Most systems these days have at least two disk drives: one for floppy disks and one for hard disks. The names fit. Floppy disks are thin circular sheets of magnetic tape material. Hard disks are solid platters made of metal (usually) and coated with magnetic material.

Floppy disks—portable storage. Whoever said you can't take it with you obviously was not referring to floppy disks, which can be removed from the machine and carried, mailed or filed. Floppy disks are used to store relatively small amounts of data, and they are relatively inexpensive. They are also quite slow when it comes to data retrieval.

There are currently two main sizes of floppy disks. The more popular type is 5¼ inches in diameter, and it is enclosed in a flimsy jacket (usually black). If you hold the disk jacket by the edge and vigorously shake your wrist, the disk will "flop" back and forth (and perhaps become unusable). A newer type of floppy disk is 3½ inches in diameter, and it is enclosed in a plastic jacket (usually blue). Because the jacket is solid, this disk will not flex like the 5¼-inch disks, and is consequently more durable.

Floppy disks also come in different densities. The term density refers to how much data the disk can hold. The more data it can hold, the higher the density, since the disk size stays

the same. The way to get more data in the same amount of space is to cram it together more tightly. Currently, both 5¼-inch and 3½-inch disks are available in two densities—double density (normal) and high density. Storage capacities are as follows:

	Double	High
5¼-inch	360K	1.2Mb
3½-inch	720K	1.44Mb

You already know that "K" means kilobytes and represents 1,000 characters of data. Once you get to 1,000K (1,000,000 bytes), the term megabytes (Mb) is used. One megabyte is equal to 1,000K, or one million, characters of data.

Every computer needs at least one floppy disk drive, because software you buy in the stores is shipped on floppy disks, and because you will need a way to make backup copies of the data you store on the hard disk. Because the 3½-inch disks are a newcomer to the computer scene, it should come as no surprise that most software is shipped on 5¼-inch disks. This trend will reverse as 3½-inch drives become more prevalent. In fact, most software manufacturers will either supply both disk sizes or will replace 5¼-inch disks with 3½-inch disks upon request.

Author's Choice: One high-density disk of either diameter. My personal preference is 3½-inch, but there are a number of disadvantages. The best of both worlds would be two high-density drives, one of each diameter.

Hard disks—you can hardly do without one. The hard disk serves as your mass-storage device. While floppy disks can hold from 360K to 1.4Mb, hard disks can hold from 10Mb to more than 800Mb! In order to get these types of capacities, hard-disk drives are sealed units in which multiple disk platters spin at very high speeds. Data is written on both sides of each platter by read/write heads which float so close to the disk surface that a smoke particle would be many times larger than the space between the head and the platter. That's why hard disks are sealed!

Programs and data purchased from computer stores and other sources are usually copied from the floppy disks on which they are shipped onto the hard disk. It's possible to have thousands of programs and data files on a single hard disk. Once you have located them on the hard disk, you can access these programs at any time, without having to locate the disk they were on. The concept is similar to that of taping record albums.

Although hard disks come in various physical sizes, the most important considerations when selecting a hard disk are how much data it can hold and how fast it is. Hard-disk-drive capacity is rated in megabytes (Mb). In 1985, 5 or 10Mb drives were commonly purchased. In 1988, you are more likely to see people buy 20, 40 or 70Mb drives. Because of the tremendous and rapid advances in disk-drive technology, capacities are continually increasing. Most drive manufacturers discontinue production of lower-capacity drives as larger drives are released.

Another example of the advances that have been made concerns the speed of the drive. Drive speeds are stated as the number of milliseconds (ms) it takes for the drive to locate (access) data on request—access time. The lower the amount of time required, the faster the drive. Whereas 1985 vintage drives had access times of more than 120 milliseconds (ms), current drives reduce access time to less than 30ms—or four times faster. And while the numbers alone might seem strange, consider that your computer will never be faster than its slowest part. The processor is much faster than the disk drive, and so it must wait for data to arrive from the drive before it can act. With such a heavy reliance on the disk drive, system performance improves dramatically as drives get faster. Putting a slow disk drive on a fast computer would be like putting a badly scratched record on a great stereo system.

So how much capacity do you need? Most people find that what they thought was a lot of space can become cramped in very little time. While a typical word-processing package may take only 1Mb, the documents you write start piling up. Unless they are removed from the disk, you will continue to chew up disk space. The typical accounting software package requires 5Mb at first, but growing history files can take a toll. The rule of thumb is to add up the amount of space required by all the software packages you think you might buy, and multiply by four.

Author's Choice: At least 40Mb, with access times under 40ms.

□ **Eyeing the monitor.** Monitors come in all shapes, sizes and price ranges, but at the most basic level there are two choices. You can have a color monitor or a monochrome monitor. The word monochrome means one color, and it is usually either white, green or amber on a black background. Actually, it is not as simple as it used to be, since some of the newer monitors can display grays as well, but it is easiest to think of as a choice between color or no color.

Monochrome monitors are less expensive and can be much crisper than some of the less-expensive color monitors. This "crispness" is called resolution in computer terms, and the higher the resolution, the crisper the picture. All data on the screen is displayed with lines of tiny dots. The more dots you stuff on a line, and the more lines you display on the screen, the better things look. The number of dots and lines the monitor can display is one of the key statistics in the monitor decision. A monitor with 320x200 resolution (320 dots per line, 200 lines per screen, or 64,000 total dots), has a lower resolution than one claiming 640x480 resolution (307,200 dots).

To complicate things further, monitors require circuit boards to operate. Called video adapters, these boards are usually purchased separately from the monitor and are installed inside the computer. A cable connects the

video board with the monitor. Standards were introduced to allow software to be developed to run the monitors. Think of these standards as different languages.

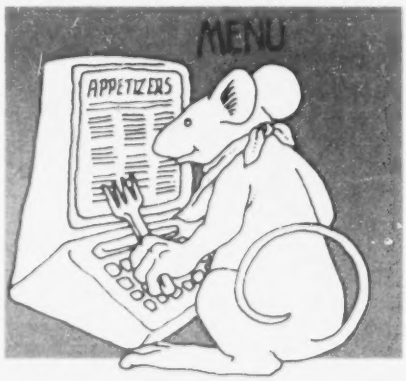
Originally, when the PC was first introduced, there were only two choices: monochrome and color. The monochrome language was called MDA (monochrome display adapter) and the color language was called CGA (color graphics adapter). At first, MDA could not display graphics. However, a company called Hercules introduced a board for monochrome monitors that added this capability, and as a result, built their own language called HGA (Hercules graphics adapter). Others have since followed Hercules' lead, and now most monochrome boards include graphics and are called monographics or MGA (monochrome graphics adapter) boards.

The CGA monitors were good for pictures, but because of their relatively low resolution (320x200) they were difficult to use for text or finer graphics. The letters would appear blurry. As technology marched forward, EGA (enhanced graphics adapter) was introduced, and with EGA, color became a clearly superior alternative. Resolutions of 640x350 were not uncommon. Both CGA and EGA are capable of displaying up to 16 colors.

The most recent development in monitor technology was introduced with IBM's new Personal System/2 (PS/2) line of computers. Called VGA (video graphics array), this new technology allows for resolutions of 640x480 in 16 colors or 320x200 in up to 256 colors from a choice of 262,144! VGA, as implemented by IBM, requires an analog monitor (most PC monitors are digital), but some board manufacturers have released VGA boards that can operate both digital and analog monitors.

All this confusion can be translated into price ranges. The least expensive approach is monochrome. Monochrome monitors can be purchased for around $100, and mono adapters can be had for as little as $50. Color monitors are more expensive, with CGA monitors in the $250-$400 range, and EGA or VGA monitors starting at $450 and going up from there. CGA boards start around $100, and EGA or VGA boards can be found for $350-$600. Remember that both the monitor and the board will be necessary. By the way, VGA comes standard with the IBM PS/2 line and is not purchased separately, although the monitor is.

Author's Choice: On a tight budget, start with monochrome. If you can swing the funds, EGA with a medium-resolution monitor would be fine for most needs.



And now to print. Printers come in three basic forms. You can choose among dot-matrix printers, character-impact printers and laser printers. You may also select either wide carriage (for printing on wider, 132-column computer paper) or narrow carriage (for standard, 80-column 8½x11-inch paper).

Dot-matrix printers have guns loaded with tiny pins that shoot out at a ribbon to produce characters. As a result, the characters are actually a group of dots. These printers are usually rated at speeds between 100 and 300 characters per second (cps). The better printers have more pins in their matrix than the less expensive ones. Prices range from $200 to $1,500.

Character-impact printers are just like typewriters. Using thimbles, balls or daisy wheels, fully formed characters are smacked against the ribbon. The result is typewriter or letter-quality printing. These printers are usually slower, ranging between 300 and 100 cps, and they are generally more expensive than dot-matrix printers. Prices range from $600 to $2,000.

Laser printers operate in a manner similar to that of a copy machine. They have drums and toners, and they print one page at a time. Laser printers are actually computer systems, with processors and RAM, and can produce graphics and near-typeset-quality documents using a variety of type styles. These printers are much more flexible, generally faster, and of course, more expensive than either of the other two types of printers. Laser printers cannot typically handle wide paper. Prices range from $1,800 to $6,000.

Author's Choice: A wide-carriage dot-matrix printer with a speed of at least 150cps.

Wrap it up

Pat yourself on the back! You now have a basic understanding of computer hardware and a new arsenal of words to use on the street. Remember that with any computer purchase, you should first consider the software that you plan to use. Don't get carried away by technology and seductive displays. Ask questions until you feel absolutely comfortable with your decision.

Warranty, support, installation and training should be considerations when buying your first system. Although maintenance contracts are usually not necessary, having someone to call if something goes wrong is a good idea. Brand names are not as critical when buying computers as are compatibility and service ability.

Finally the checkbook consideration. For a complete, low-end (8088, 256K, monochrome, 20Mb hard-disk, dot-matrix printer) plan to spend between $1,500 and $3,000, depending on the brand. For the suggested system (80286, 640K, monochrome, 40Mb, dot-matrix printer), the outlay should range from $2,000 to $4,000. Add $750 for EGA (color). If you want to go in style, the 80386 systems—with color monitors and laser printers—range from $5,000 to $15,000.

Regardless of your choice, you are sure to gain valuable insights; and with the right software, you will increase your profits and decrease your time requirements. The world of possibilities and capabilities is limited only by your imagination, creativity, skill and—yes—your checkbook. ❑

Software packages for computing calories

Computers are becoming as essential to a foodservice operation as a good set of knives. Operators are using programs for purchasing, receiving, inventory control, accounting functions and even nutritional services. Some innovative chefs and managers use nutritional software packages to calculate the nutrient content of their culinary creations. Nutritional software packages have been commonly used by nutritionists and dietitians, but many are designed for use by foodservice administrators and the layperson as well. Not all restaurateurs will be interested in purchasing a nutrient-analysis program, of course, but those who have or plan to develop menu items reduced in calories, fat, sodium or cholesterol will find it most helpful, especially during the recipe-creation phase. As with many programs, it takes a little time to become familiar with the specifics of the nutritional packages, and it helps to be familiar with personal computers in general.

The advantage to using a computerized nutritional system lies in the time it saves. Calculating nutritional content manually, by using tables and charts, is tedious, time-consuming and frustrating, especially to the uninitiated. In contrast, a computer generates the same information within minutes of receiving a recipe. For example, a chef developing heart-healthy menu items can create a recipe, check the nutritional content instantly and revise accordingly.

Nutritional software programs vary in capabilities and features. Although the results are the same, some nutritional software packages are more "user-friendly" than others. The ingredients of a given recipe are entered into the computer one by one. Some programs assign code numbers for the foods (printed in an accompanying manual) that can be used instead of entering the food by name. This process can be time-consuming, especially if the list of codes is not presented in an organized manner.

On other programs, the ingredient can be entered by name or category, and a list of choices often appears on the screen. The most appropriate food is then entered using the cursor. Some programs feature both methods.

Once the item is entered, the measure or amount must then be fed into the computer. Most programs feature a choice among measuring units (cup, teaspoon, etc.), weights (ounces, grams, etc.) and other units (one egg, one can, etc.).

The number of foods in the data bases varies from a low of 100 to more than 8,000 items. The advantage of a more extensive data base is obvious. In addition to the convenience of size, the system's ability to reduce or expand the data base should be considered, especially if your recipes feature unusual ingredients or foods.

As with the number of foods, the number of nutrients (protein, fat, calories, etc.) and constituents featured on the analysis varies considerably from program to program—from a low of eight to a high of 70. Many of those nutrients, such as amino acids or B vitamins, are not of interest to foodservice patrons, and some programs allow the number to be edited or scaled down to suit your interests.

On the other hand, food constituents that may be of concern to patrons, such as sugar, alcohol and caffeine, are not featured on all programs. Moreover, the maximum number of recipe ingredients a computer can handle ranges from 12 to 45—a consideration for those with intricate or complex recipes.

Some programs allow you to enter and store information on a recipe that may be used as a base in other items. White sauce, for instance, could be entered, analyzed and stored and then recalled by name—"white sauce"—as an ingredient in another recipe. Also, most programs will assess nutritional contribution of a serving by comparing it with the U.S. recommended daily allowances (U.S. RDA), a predeveloped standard, similar to the information provided on a label of packaged food.

Nutrient-analysis software packages can be purchased for as little as $100 for a basic program. Prices increase with the level of sophistication and the number of options. Comprehensive programs are priced from $500 to $2,000. The more expensive packages are often combined with other functions related to either foodservice management (menu planning, inventory, food costing, etc.) or nutritional analysis (used to determine the specific nutritional needs of individual clients). Unless you are in a health-care setting, the foodservice management package is probably a better bet.

It is best to try a program before you purchase it. Some companies provide a demonstration disk (with a limited data base), and firms that sell the more costly packages will send a representative to demonstrate a package. (See the association's *Directory of Computer Hardware and Software for the Foodservice Industry* for a list of programs.)

If performing your own nutritional analyses sounds more time-consuming than your schedule allows, there is another option. Some firms that sell software packages will also analyze recipes for a fee. Given a recipe's specific ingredients, quantities and yield, these firms provide a printout of the nutrient content. You can even specify the nutrients you want. Costs for the service can run from $7 to $20 per recipe, depending on the number of ingredients. This service is not appropriate for everyone. There is a time lag involved, and for operators who frequently change their menu items, the procedure can become costly. But if you have a menu that stays fixed over time or if you want nutritional information on only a few recipes, this service may be more desirable than purchasing a software package. (Refer to the association's *A Nutrition Guide for the Restaurateur* for a list of firms offering this service.)

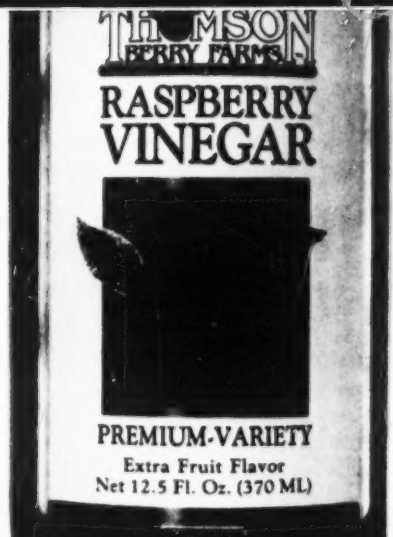
Finally, many consulting dietitians own nutritional software packages and may be available to assist you in developing more healthful recipes.

—Claire Regan, R.D.

Patrons access nutrition info at Whataburger

Officials at Whataburger, Inc. (430 units, Corpus Christi, Texas) put computer nutrition programs to use in a unique and innovative way. Rather than using the technology to determine the nutrient content of products, they use it to deliver nutritional information to patrons. Their Whataburger Information Network (WIN) system serves a dual function. (1) It provides nutritional information and (2) it acts as an electronic customer-feedback program.

The nutritional values of all Whataburger menu items can easily be accessed by patrons via WIN's interactive hardware. Information on calories and levels of cholesterol, sodium, proteins, fats, carbohydrates, fiber and 12 vitamins and minerals are provided. The touch-screen system is easy to use and extremely popular with Whataburger customers. Each week 900 to 1,00 requests for nutritional information are processed by WIN, and this usage has been fairly constant since its introduction in 1987. Originally installed in five units, Whataburger officials plan to have the WIN system in 50 additional units by the end of the year.



VINEGARS

by Laurence Greenberg

Vinegar is one of the oldest foods known to man. Most likely, it was discovered some 10,000 years ago when wine was accidentally allowed to ferment a second time. For most of those millenia, vinegar was used for cleaning, canning and medicinal purposes. But in recent years, vinegar's popularity has grown along with consumers' interest in gourmet food products. And as Jennifer Harvey Lang writes in her book *Tastings*, "This new interest in vinegar has nothing to do with cider vinegar or clear white distilled vinegar, the kinds most suited to household chores. Instead, we have gone back to vinegar's beginnings to rediscover that the tastiest and mildest vinegar is made from wine in a process as careful as wine making itself."

That vinegar springs forth from wine is illustrated by the word's French roots: *vin* for "wine" and *aigre* for "sour." Vinegar is a product of the fermentation of alcohol in which the alcohol combines with oxygen and certain bacteria to form acetic acid and water. It is acetic acid that gives vinegar its characteristic tartness and its preservative powers. Actually, any liquid capable of being turned into alcohol can be made into vinegar. Apples, grapes, malted barley and figs are several source materials, each imparting particular flavors and aromas.

For cooking, wine vinegars made from grapes are the overwhelming favorites, although cider and malt vinegars also appear in kitchens. Red wine, white wine, champagne and sherry vinegars are all variations of the basic wine vinegar.

Laurence Greenberg is a freelance writer in Washington, DC.

Vinaigrettes

One of the most common food uses for vinegar is in the vinaigrette sauce, which has long been a staple of French cooking. The name for this sauce was taken from the small boxes containing sponges soaked in vinegar that wealthy people carried through the streets of Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries and held to their noses to ward off foul odors from open sewers and garbage.

The vinaigrette is most popularly known as a dressing for salads. It is enjoying something of a renaissance in restaurants across the United States because it is a more appropriate complement to the flavors of fresh produce and new varieties of greens than thicker, creamier dressings, which often overwhelm subtle flavors. In addition, vinaigrettes, lacking cream and eggs and often including olive oil (thought to guard against heart disease) appeal to diet-conscious customers.

Vinaigrettes are simple to make, and they are open to endless variation—provided one is willing to defy tradition. The traditional recipe calls for three to four parts oil to one part vinegar, plus salt and pepper—with the optional addition of mustard and fresh herbs. The amount of vinegar used is really a question of personal taste and of the type of salad the vinaigrette will be used on. Generally, the less delicately flavored greens—bitter and peppery varieties—can stand up to more vinegar.

For example, a vinaigrette made with Italian balsamic vinegar (see sidebar) and olive oil is delicious tossed with arugula and radicchio, since the slightly sweet vinegar complements these intensely flavored greens. A fancier dressing can be made by adding some chopped tomato, a little garlic and a fresh herb, such as basil or rosemary. This type of vinaigrette would also make a good sauce for blanched and chilled vegetables, such as asparagus or green beans.

To a traditionalist, the addition of cheese to a vinaigrette would be heresy, but cheese can add just the right element to a salad. One particularly good example combines Stilton cheese with a light olive or peanut oil, slivered shallots and raspberry vinegar. The vinaigrette is made in the usual way, but the cheese is crumbled in as the final step.

Of course, with a recipe as simple as the vinaigrette, the success of the product depends a great deal upon the quality of the ingredients. To that end, high-quality vinegars and oils are a must.

Vinaigrettes with the main course

For the same reasons that vinaigrettes complement salads, they also go well with meat and fish—especially the oily varieties, such as tuna, swordfish and salmon. Furthermore, vinaigrettes have the advan-

tage of being easy to execute with no last-minute preparation.

At The Mansion On Turtle Creek, a fine-dining establishment in Dallas, executive chef Dean Fearing notes that wood-grilled red snapper with a tomatillo/serrano-chile vinaigrette is his best seller. This tasty vinaigrette is made with balsamic vinegar. "Vinaigrettes provide a lighter sauce and increase the acidity level of foods—a taste popular in the Dallas area due to the influence of Mexican cuisine," Fearing explains. Fearing also notes the use of rice wine vinegars in his expanding repertoire of Asian-influenced dishes.

In the experimental kitchen of the Tabard Inn restaurant in Washington, DC, vinaigrettes figure prominently in the entrees. For example, a spice-and-sesame-coated salmon filet is sauteed and served with an Oriental peanut vinaigrette. A touch of brown sugar adds the sweetness to this sweet and sour dish. The Tabard Inn also offers sauteed tenderloin with a vinaigrette made of cognac, walnut oil and sherry vinegar. "We have had a very good response to the cognac vinaigrette," says chef Lisa Joy.

A vinaigrette sauce tossed with chilled seafood can make a great light lunch or appetizer salad at dinner; vinaigrettes can add a light touch to meat salads as well. Two solid sellers at The Silver Palate, notes Melody Ozdenak, executive chef of this well-known New York gourmet carry-out and retail store, include a beef salad with a red wine vinaigrette and a chicken salad with peanut oil and tarragon vinegar.

Fruit and vegetable salsas have also become popular accompaniments to seafood. Executive Chef Seppi Renggli of The Four Seasons in New York City offers salsas with fish. He says his tomato-and-peach salsa, made with red wine vinegar, goes well with blackened, grilled and baked fish. Renggli also features a pineapple-mango salsa with a broiled shrimp brochette. The salsa includes maui onion, jalapeno pepper, vinegar and garlic.

Vinegar in sauces

The use of vinegar in sauces has a long history. In ancient times, the Romans set out bowls of vinegar on their dining tables for dipping bread. This practice may seem extreme, but today we have a similar practice—although it is much more covert. Who hasn't surreptitiously soaked bread in the pool of oil and vinegar dressing left at the bottom of the salad bowl? Good vinegar, like good olive oil, is delicious on its own.

Vinegar was elevated to new culinary heights in the 17th century, when the great French chef Pierre de la Varenne

How to make flavored vinegars

Fruit and herb-flavored vinegars are relatively easy to make; and when used in vinaigrettes and other sauces, they can add interest to your menu. Almost any fruit is a good candidate for making vinegar. Among the best are summer fruits, such as berries, peaches, plums and currants.

To make fruit vinegars, it is best to start with white-wine vinegar and then add one-half to one pound of fruit per cup of vinegar. This will produce an intense flavor. Here's how it's done.

First wash and, if necessary, pit the fruit. Then crush or chop the fruit, place it in a clean jar and cover with vinegar. Let it stand for two to four weeks; then strain and simmer gently for a few minutes, to kill any bacteria in the vinegar. If desired, a little sugar can be added—about one tablespoon per cup of vinegar.

An alternative method, which speeds the preparation process, is to heat the unflavored vinegar just to a simmer before pouring it over the crushed fruit. After steeping overnight, the vinegar should be ready for straining.

The procedure for making herbal vinegar is much the same as for fruit. Any fresh herb is ideal for flavoring vinegar. Tarragon, thyme, basil, rosemary and oregano—alone or in combination—work especially well. In general, stronger herbs can take a red wine or cider vinegar, but those that are more delicately flavored should be steeped in white wine vinegar.

Use about one cup of herbs for every two cups of vinegar. First, place the herbs in a clean, dry jar or bottle. Then, heat the vinegar just to a simmer and pour over the herbs, being sure to cover them completely. Steep for at least 10 days, shaking the container occasionally. If you wish to add garlic or shallots to your vinegar, use a very small amount to avoid overpowering the other herbs. Garlic and shallots should be crushed slightly before steeping. After steeping, strain and pour the vinegar into a clean container. For tableside use, you may want to place a fresh herb sprig in the bottle as a decorative accent.

ORANGE BUTTER SAUCE WITH BASIL

This sauce makes a fine accompaniment to steamed or grilled fish or even warm asparagus spears.

Serves 10

Ingredients:
4 Tbs. shallots, chopped
4 Tbs. fresh basil, roughly chopped
Zest of 1 orange
⅓ cup champagne or white wine vinegar
1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
1 lb. unsalted butter
Salt, white pepper

Method:
Reduce the shallots, basil, orange zest, vinegar and orange juice (in a stainless-steel pan) until mixture reaches a syrupy consistency.

On very low heat or over a bain-marie, whisk cold butter cut in 1-inch cubes into the orange-juice reduction. The butter must be incorporated slowly, allowing each cube to melt before more is added.

Strain the sauce and season to taste with salt and pepper. Keep the sauce warm until it is served.

TABARD INN'S COGNAC VINAIGRETTE

This vinaigrette is excellent with sauteed or grilled tenderloin.

Serves 20

Ingredients:
½ cup fresh chopped thyme
1½ cups chopped shallots
2 cups whole unsalted butter
3 cups cognac
1½ cups sherry vinegar
2 cups walnut oil
Salt, pepper

Method:
Melt butter and saute shallots and thyme without browning. Meanwhile, heat cognac in a deep saucepan until it begins to flame. Remove from heat and allow to burn until the flames are extinguished (this removes the alcohol from the cognac).

After the cognac has cooled slightly, whisk into butter mixture. Then whisk in sherry vinegar and walnut oil. Season with salt and plenty of pepper.

RASPBERRY CHICKEN

Serves 2 to 4

Ingredients:
2 whole boneless, skinless chicken breasts, about 2 pounds
2 Tbs. sweet butter
¼ cup finely chopped yellow onion
4 Tbs. raspberry vinegar
¼ cup chicken stock or canned broth
¼ cup heavy cream or creme fraiche
1 Tbs. canned crushed tomatoes
16 fresh raspberries (optional)

Method:
Cut each chicken breast into halves along the breastbone line. Remove the filet mignon, the finger-size muscle on the back of each half, and reserve for another use. Flatten each breast half by pressing it gently with the palm of your hand.

Melt the butter in a large skillet. Raise the heat, add the chicken halves, and cook for about 3 minutes per side, or until they are lightly colored. Remove from the skillet and reserve. Add the onion to the fat in the pan and cook, covered, over low heat until tender, about 15 minutes.

Add the vinegar, raise the heat and cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until vinegar is reduced to a syrupy spoonful. Whisk in the chicken stock, heavy cream and crushed tomatoes and simmer for 1 minute.

Return chicken halves to the skillet and simmer them gently in the sauce, basting often, until they are just done and the sauce has been reduced and thickened slightly, about 5 minutes; do not overcook.

Remove chicken halves with a slotted spoon and arrange on a heated serving platter. Add the raspberries to the sauce in the skillet and cook over low heat for 1 minute. Do not stir the berries with a spoon, merely swirl them in the sauce by shaking the skillet. Pour sauce over chicken and serve immediately.

—The Silver Palate Cookbook

A bow to balsamic vinegar

One type of vinegar that deserves special mention due to its rising popularity is balsamic vinegar, or as the Italians call it, *aceto balsamico*. This specialty wine vinegar is the gastronomic star of Modena, Italy, where it has been made by the Modenese for centuries. According to food writer Waverly Root in his book *The Food of Italy*, the earliest written reference to balsamic vinegar dates from 1046 A.D., when Bonifacio di Canossa presented a barrel of it to Emperor Henry III at his coronation.

Balsamic vinegar is made from grapes high in sugar, in a process that can take as long as 50 years or more. The newly made herb-flavored wine vinegar is slowly aged in a succession of barrels made of oak, chestnut, mulberry and juniper wood. Each barrel imparts new fragrances and flavors to the aging liquid. After several years of blending, the liquid is amber-colored, with more body than regular wine vinegars. Although it is highly acidic, balsamic vinegar is mellow with sufficient sweetness to balance the tartness. It is an excellent complement to tomato dishes, and a few dashes added to fresh strawberries can bring out their sweetness.

Because it is expensive to produce, due to the lengthy aging process and the large amount of grapes needed to make a small amount of vinegar, *aceto balsamico* can cost as much as a bottle of first-class Italian wine. As a result, not all balsamic vinegar imported into the United States is made by traditional methods. To meet the high demand for this product, commercial producers in Italy often utilize a quick-production process. The result, writes Jennifer Lang in *Tastings*, is "an interesting and tasty vinegar, but not up to the quality of the traditional *aceto balsamico*."

recommended a sauce based on vinegar, meat drippings and lemon juice or *verjus* (the juice of sour grapes). Before that, French dishes had been heavily spiced and had featured thick meat and almond mixtures. La Varenne's vinegar sauce may not sound particularly appetizing, but many modern classics have very similar ingredients. Duck a l'orange, for example, has a sauce made of vinegar, sugar, duck stock and drippings, orange peel and arrowroot. And who would turn his nose up at a well-prepared rendition of this dish?

Today one of the prevalent uses of vinegar in French cooking is the beurre blanc popularized by nouvelle cuisine chefs during the 1970s. It is a sauce in which whole butter is added to a reduction of wine, vinegar, shallots and seasonings to achieve a thick, creamy emulsion. The high concentration of acids that is created when the vinegar-wine mixture is thoroughly reduced allows the milk solids to remain in suspension. On the palate, the vinegar serves as a counterpoint to the richness of the butter, producing a surprisingly light-tasting sauce—although it can hardly be considered low-cal.

This type of sauce is an excellent accompaniment to many dishes, such as fish and shellfish, vegetables, and sautees of veal, livers and sweetbreads. For a different twist, a citrus juice, such as fresh orange or grapefruit juice, can be used as an alternative to the wine. An orange butter sauce with a touch of tarragon or basil makes an intensely flavored yet nonmasking foil for steamed or grilled fish.

Vinegar is also a lively addition to reduction sauces made with meat stocks or glazes, especially those that accompany game. At The Silver Palate, raspberry vinegar is used to deglaze the pan in which boneless chicken breasts have been sauteed. The sauce is finished with chicken stock, creme fraiche and crushed tomatoes.

Marinades

Vinegar also makes a fine marinade for meat, especially for game. A marinade typically used to tenderize and flavor rabbit includes red wine vinegar, red wine and herbs. Sherry vinegar is also a good addition to marinades for game, because it can stand up to a strongly flavored meat. At The Mansion On Turtle Creek, Dean Fearing uses a fresh herb marinade made with balsamic vinegar for his veal chops.

Pickling

Any discussion of vinegar would be incomplete without mentioning pickling. This process, originally used as a preservative for fruits and vegetables, has become an end in itself because it accents the crisp and crunchy quality of vegetables. During the summer months, when customers demand more salads, pickled vegetables can add interest to cold-salad plates. Pickled beets, gardenia salad (made with cauliflower, carrots, peppers and onion) and marinated cabbage are just a few of the possibilities.

Onions pickled with cider vinegar, cumin seed, oregano and garlic make an excellent garnish for grilled meats or Mexican dishes. This sort of distinctive side dish or condiment can add the special touch that customers remember. For example, the Tabard Inn offers pickled onions with its hamburgers at lunch. A basic pickling recipe is used, but the type of vinegar and spices can be changed to produce different flavors. ❑

Dinner takeout—a family occasion

The demand for takeout meals at dinner has been partially driven by the changing demographics of the American labor force and family. With its time-saving appeal, takeout at dinner has gained popularity with dual-career families.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the percentage of married women working has risen from 44.5 percent in 1975 to 55.8 percent in 1987. This increase has had a profound effect on the definition and structure of the American family.

An attractive alternative for working couples

Working couples, with less leisure time than before, now place a greater premium on convenience and saving time when conducting daily, routine activities. With its time-saving appeal, dinner takeout is an attractive alternative for dual-career households and other groups that do not want to prepare dinner at home.

According to a 1986 National Restaurant Association study, *The Takeout Market*, among households in which the wife or mother was employed full time, more than half made dinner takeout purchases two or more times a month, and only one out of 10 households reported never buying takeout food and beverages for dinner. For households in which the wife or mother was not employed outside the home, takeout dinner was less common. In this group, 36 percent reported they were frequent users of takeout dinner, and 18 percent said they were nonusers.

CREST* data confirm that dinner takeout appeals to dual-income households. Both working parents and affluent traditional families recorded above-average usage of dinner takeout in 1987.

Appeals to larger households

Dinner takeout is also favored by larger households. According to CREST, households with three or more members accounted for 69 percent of all takeout-dinner occasions in 1987. Both 3-4 person and 5+ person households showed above-average use of dinner takeout.

With such a large proportion of takeout-dinner occasions coming from larger households, the average party size for dinner takeout was 2.4, well ahead of the 1.5 for lunch takeout and the 1.6 for breakfast takeout. According to *The Takeout Market*, a takeout dinner is much more likely to be purchased for two or more people, whereas a takeout breakfast or lunch tends to be purchased for only one person.

Where takeout dinner is eaten

Once a takeout dinner has been purchased, consumers are most likely to eat it at home. Three-fourths of the people surveyed in *The Takeout Market* stated that they ate their takeout dinner at home, compared with only 39 percent for takeout lunch and just 30 percent for takeout breakfast.

Takeout-dinner buyers are likely to have come from the home prior to making their purchase. Nearly half (48 percent) of the respondents indicated that they were at home prior to going to the restaurant for their takeout evening meal. However, some people stopped off to buy takeout dinner on their way home from work. Just under a third of takeout-dinner buyers said they were working prior to their purchase.

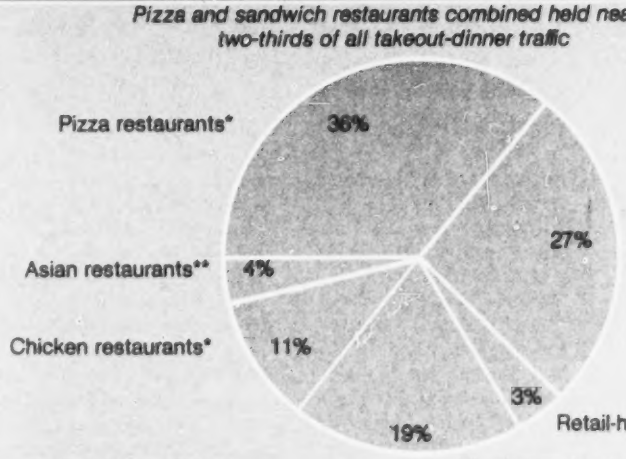
A family affair

Dinner takeout is much more likely to involve the entire household than is lunch or breakfast takeout. According to *The Takeout Market*, 61 percent of all takeout-dinner purchasers

**CREST stands for Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, a diary survey conducted by one of the NPD marketing and research companies.*

Share of takeout-dinner market, 1987

Pizza and sandwich restaurants combined held nearly two-thirds of all takeout-dinner traffic



*Quickservice
**Quickservice, midscale, and upscale
Source: National Restaurant Association CREST Survey

placed their orders for the entire household, whereas lunch and takeout-breakfast buyers usually bought solely for themselves. Only 37 percent of lunch and 38 percent of takeout-breakfast buyers made their purchases for the entire household.

Children favor eating takeout food for dinner. Despite being below-average users of takeout overall, children under the age of 17 were above-average takeout-dinner eaters in 1987, according to CREST. They were responsible for 28 percent of takeout-dinner occasions, compared to 24 percent of total off-premises occasions.

Not surprisingly, dinner takeout has attracted a following among those who show a preference for takeout in general, including white-collar workers, the college-educated, 25 to 34-year-olds, yuppies, singles and higher-income households.

Explosive growth

Takeout-traffic advances at dinner have been driving overall industry takeout growth. Customer counts for takeout dinner shot up 49 percent between 1982 and 1987, easily surpassing the gains of 19 percent for off-premises lunch and 18 percent for off-premises breakfast. Takeout for dinner has overshadowed moderate advances for on-premises dinner traffic, which was up 6 percent between 1982 and 1987. With more consumers now ordering takeout food for the evening meal, the percentage of off-premises eater occasions for dinner has climbed, from 39 percent in 1982 to 46 percent in 1987, according to CREST.

Quickservice leads growth

Quickservice restaurants showed the largest increase in takeout-dinner traffic, jumping an astounding 53 percent from 1982 to 1987. One hot concept pushing growth was pizza (see sidebar). Retail establishments also did well in the off-premises dinner market; convenience store visits climbed by a multiple of 10 and grocery stores watched their customer counts triple.

Quickservice ethnic restaurants are doing a booming takeout-dinner business. Takeout-dinner visits at Asian restaurants more than doubled between 1982 and 1987, and visits rose 77 percent at Mexican restaurants over the same period. Strong takeout-dinner traffic growth was also recorded by barbecue and sandwich restaurants; customer counts were up 33 percent and 18 percent, respectively, between 1982 and 1987.

After quickservice establishments, midscale restaurants had the largest increase in off-premises dinner visits, with an increase of 16 percent over the five-year span. Dinner takeout remains a bright spot for midscale operators, who saw a decline in total traffic between 1982 and 1987. Midscale ethnic concepts are doing particularly well in appealing to the takeout-dinner buyer. Traffic jumped 51 percent and 47 percent, respectively, at Italian and Asian restaurants. Midscale barbecue restaurants are also winning

Pizza to go

Pizza restaurants are one of the hottest concepts in the takeout-dinner market. Off-premises dinner traffic at pizza restaurants more than doubled between 1982 and 1987, making these establishments a dominant force in the takeout-dinner market.

According to CREST data for 1987, pizza restaurants accounted for more than one in three takeout-dinner occasions, placing them just ahead of sandwich restaurants as the market share leader for dinner takeout. In addition, 26 percent of all takeout-dinner visits at pizza restaurants involved consumer use of promotions.

Pizza restaurants are also the delivery champions. Delivery accounted for 22 percent of occasions at pizza restaurants in 1987—more than at any other concept.

As a restaurant food, pizza has expanded its appeal. In 1987, according to CREST, pizza was consumed on 12 percent of all restaurant occasions, up from 8 percent in 1982. Thin-crust pizza remained the most popular type, accounting for 7 percent of all occasions, followed by thick-crust and pan versions, with 3 percent and 2 percent, respectively. Stuffed pizza was still a novelty item in 1987.

Traffic growth at dinner 1982-1987

Takeout traffic at dinner has skyrocketed

	Percent change in off-premises occasions	Percent change in on-premises occasions
All restaurants	49%	6%
• Quickservice restaurants	53	14
• Midscale restaurants	16	–4
• Upscale restaurants	13	19

Source: National Restaurant Association CREST Survey

The takeout-dinner decision

Recent National Restaurant Association research on consumer behavior and decision-making at dinner reveals that the decision to purchase takeout food for dinner is usually made spontaneously. In a soon-to-be-published association study investigating the various types of dinner situations in which prepared food is purchased, 60 percent of adult consumers report making their decision to order dinner to go within one hour of purchase. Nineteen percent stated that they reached the decision one to two hours in advance.

The takeout-dinner meal was usually purchased between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. and took an average of 28 minutes to complete. Takeout dinner was least likely to be bought on Saturdays. Study participants responded that the two major reasons behind their decision to buy takeout-dinner was "to satisfy a craving" and "it was the easiest thing available."

takeout fans; their off-premises dinner traffic was up 32 percent.

Upscale restaurants experienced solid increases in takeout-dinner traffic as well. Between 1982 and 1987, off-premises dinner traffic advanced 13 percent. Upscale barbecue and Asian restaurants did even better than the segment average; their customer counts for dinner takeout rose 80 percent and 42 percent, respectively, since 1982.

Promoting dinner takeout

Takeout buyers are most likely to take advantage of promotional offerings at dinner. In 1987, 17 percent of takeout-dinner occasions entailed the use of promotions, according to CREST. By comparison, the percent of occasions that included a promotion for lunch and breakfast takeout was 10 percent and 5 percent, respectively. In general, consumers are most likely to respond to promotions for dinner purchases. In 1987, 24 percent of all dinner occasions involved use of a promotion.

Among industry segments, the highest proportion of eater occasions in which promotions were used for takeout-dinner in 1987 was reported at quickservice restaurants—17 percent. Midscale and upscale restaurants followed, with 8 percent and 5 percent. Concepts that reported high proportions of promotional usage for takeout-dinner in 1987 include pizza restaurants, quickservice chicken restaurants, quickservice sandwich restaurants, quickservice fish restaurants and quickservice Mexican restaurants.

—Sebastian O'Kelly

More restaurant parties include children, deals

Between 1982 and 1987, there was an increase in the number of parties that included children under 12 and an increase in the percent of occasions where a promotion was used—particularly among parties of adults.

Although the request for a "table for two" will still remain a common one, more and more parties include children. According to CREST data, the number of parties at restaurants that included children under 12 years of age increased between 1982 and 1987, while the number of adults-only parties remained constant or even decreased.

This shift can be seen throughout the industry. Overall, the proportion of occasions represented by adults-only parties declined by more than 1 percent. The share of parties with children under 12 climbed by 20 percent.

Italian midscale establishments led all restaurants in serving fewer adults-only parties and more groups with children. They were followed by upscale Italian

Percent of promotion usage by party composition, industry segment and meal period, 1982 versus 1987

Between 1982 and 1987, deal usage increased more among adults-only restaurant parties than among parties of adults with children

	Percent of promotion usage by adults-only parties			Percent of promotion usage by parties of adults with children		
	1982	1987	Change	1982	1987	Change
Total industry	9.2%	16.0%	73.9%	16.1%	21.1%	31.0%
Quickservice	11.0	17.9	62.7	18.2	22.9	25.8
Midscale	7.2	13.1	81.9	9.0	11.0	22.2
Upscale	7.3	12.6	72.6	6.3	12.1	92.1
Breakfast	7.7	14.1	83.1	11.5	11.5	0.0
Lunch	8.5	15.5	82.4	15.3	19.7	28.8
Dinner	13.0	20.2	55.4	19.4	26.4	36.1
Snack	4.9	9.8	100.0	10.1	12.8	26.7

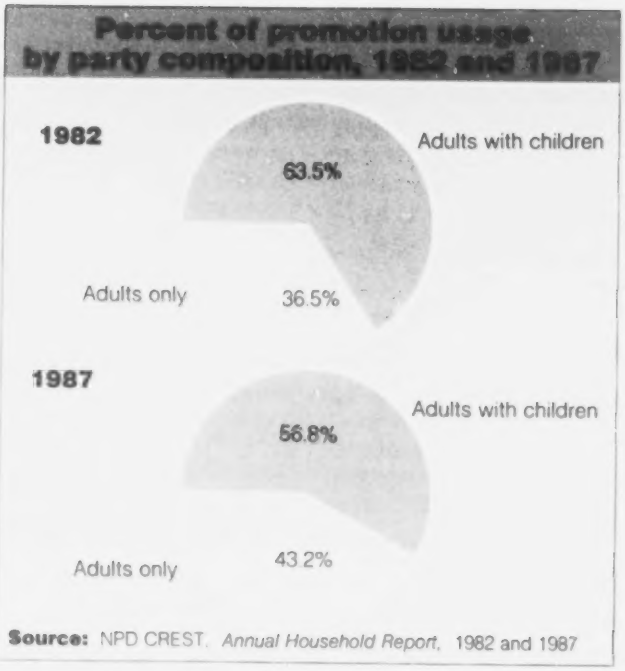
Source: NPD/CREST, *Annual Household Report*, 1982 and 1987

Percent change in distribution of occasions by party composition between 1982 and 1987

Since 1982, the share of adults-only parties has decreased slightly, while the share of parties with adults and children under 12 years of age has increased

	Share of parties adults-only			Share of parties with adults and children under 12		
	1982	1987	Change in share	1982	1987	Change in share
Total industry	78.6%	77.5%	-1.4%	10.0%	12.0%	20.0%
Quickservice	72.9	72.6	-0.4	13.5	15.0	11.1
Midscale	86.0	86.2	0.2	5.3	6.6	20.8
Upscale	88.2	88.8	0.7	4.2	5.6	33.3
Breakfast	84.2	84.5	0.4	8.1	8.7	7.4
Lunch	83.4	83.0	-0.5	7.3	8.9	21.9
Dinner	72.1	70.1	-2.8	14.0	16.6	18.6
Snack	75.0	73.3	-2.3	10.8	12.8	18.5

Source: NPD/CREST, *Annual Household Report*, 1982 and 1987



Source: NPD CREST, *Annual Household Report*, 1982 and 1987

restaurants, quickservice barbecue restaurants and cafeterias. Mexican restaurants exhibited the most consistent changes in party composition across all segments.

When looked at by meal period, these party-composition changes were seen in all meal periods except breakfast. Dinner parties consisting of only adults exhibited a 2.8 percent share decrease between 1982 and 1987, while the share of parties with children showed a nearly 19 percent increase. Snack periods showed a similar trend. Breakfast visits by both groups remained relatively constant as did lunch visits by adults. There was, however, an increase in the share of lunch occasions by adults with children under 12.

Use of promotions

Overall, promotion use soared 69 percent between 1982 and 1987. Although mixed parties of adults and children still comprise the largest proportion of promotion users, the percent of adults-only parties using deals has increased greatly.

The change can best be illustrated by reviewing specific restaurant categories. For example, in quickservice establishments, adults-only promotion use grew 63 percent from 1982 to 1987, while use by adults with children jumped 26 percent. At fast food hamburger restaurants, promotion use by adults climbed a hefty 54 percent, while the use of deals by adults with children remained flat.

Similar deal-usage trends were demonstrated throughout the industry, with the exception of quickservice pizza, midscale hotel and midscale barbecue restaurants. In these restaurant categories, adults with children showed greater gains in the percentage of promotion use than did parties of just adults.

—Nancy Michalski

Occupation costs

With rents, taxes and property insurance rates rising steeply in many parts of the country, holding down these occupation expenses plays a greater role in the daily lives of restaurateurs. As the National Restaurant Association's Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1988 *points out, after food and payroll expenses, occupation costs have become an operator's largest expense.*

Limited-menu, no-tableservice establishments reported the highest median occupation costs of the four restaurant types in 1987 at $480 per seat and $20.53 per square foot. Respondents spent 7.7 percent of sales revenue on expenses pertaining to occupancy. Rent was the most expensive component at 5.8 percent of total sales—the highest percentage of all restaurant types. This high proportion of rent to sales is partially due to the high percentage of limited-menu, no-tableservice operators who lease both the land and the building where their establishment is located. In 1987, 61 percent of these respondents fell into this category. In contrast, only 38 percent of full-menu, tableservice operators lease both their land and their building.

In 1987, limited-menu, no-tableservice restaurants also had the highest median taxes and property insurance of the four restaurant types. However, limited-menu, no-tableservice operations had the lowest proportion of property insurance to sales—0.7 percent in 1987. These restaurants also paid out a relatively low 1.2 percent of total sales revenue in taxes.

Limited-menu tableservice

After limited-menu, no-tableservice restaurants, limited-menu tableservice establishments had the sec-

How to order the report

The National Restaurant Association's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1988* provides detailed data on restaurant occupation costs. A copy of the report (CS 958) costs $30 for members and $60 for non-members. When ordering, please include payment plus a 10 percent shipping and handling fee and any applicable tax. Washington, DC, residents must add 6 percent. Illinois residents must add 7 percent, and Chicago residents must add an additional 1 percent, making their total tax 8 percent. No purchase orders, please.

You can charge orders by including name of charge card, name of cardholder, card number, expiration date and signature. Credit-card telephone orders are also accepted. Call the National Restaurant Association at 1-800-424-5156 (toll free) or (202) 331-5900. Checks or money orders should be sent to the National Restaurant Association, 1200 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036-3097.

ond-highest median occupation costs in 1987 at $355 per seat and $13.56 per square foot. Overall, occupation costs accounted for 7.7 percent of total sales at limited-menu tableservice restaurants—the same proportion reported at limited-menu, no-tableservice establishments.

Rent remains the major component of occupation costs, accounting for 5.1 percent of sales among these respondents. Survey participants allocated 1.1 percent of total revenues to property insurance fees. Among the four restaurant types, limited-menu tableservice restaurants bore the greatest tax burden relative to their sales revenue. In 1987 these establishments allocated 1.5 percent of their sales for taxes.

Restaurant occupation costs per seat, 1987*

Cafeterias had the lowest occupation cost per seat in 1987

	Full-menu tableservice	Limited-menu tableservice	Cafeteria	Limited-menu, no tableservice
Rent	$241	$256	$232	$427
Property taxes	30	33	24	53
Other taxes	40	60	44	87
Property insurance	70	65	42	78
Total occupation costs	$332	$355	$286	$480

*Costs represent median values

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1988*

Occupation costs as percent of sales, 1987*

Full-menu tableservice restaurants had the lowest ratio of rent expenses to sales in 1987

	Cafeteria	Full-menu tableservice	Limited-menu tableservice	Limited-menu, no tableservice
Rent	4.7%	4.4%	5.1%	5.8%
Property taxes	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.6
Other taxes	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.6
Property insurance	0.8	1.3	1.1	0.7
Total occupation costs	6.6%	7.0%	7.7%	7.7%

*All figures are weighted averages

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1988*

Full-menu tableservice

Occupation costs accounted for 7 percent of the full-menu tableservice sales dollar in 1987. This was due in part to the low ratio of rent expenses to sales. According to the *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1988*, full-menu tableservice restaurants apportioned 4.4 percent of their sales dollar for rent in 1987—the lowest percentage among the four restaurant types.

The larger proportion of building and land ownership among full-menu tableservice operators helps to explain the low ratio of rent expenses to sales.

Forty-eight percent of the full-menu tableservice survey respondents owned both the building and the land on which their establishments were located, compared with 26 percent for limited-menu, no-tableservice operators.

Full-menu tableservice restaurants paid 1.3 percent of their total sales in taxes, and the proportion of property insurance expenses to total sales was higher at these restaurants than at any other restaurant type (1.3 percent in 1987).

Cafeterias

Cafeterias reported the lowest median occupation costs of all restaurant types in 1987. Median occupation costs were $286 per seat, and they accounted for 6.6 percent of total sales. Median rent represented only 4.7 percent of sales at cafeterias. Survey participants faced relatively low property insurance and taxes in 1987; these costs captured 1.9 percent of sales.

Occupation costs by location, years in business

According to the association study, restaurant occupation costs vary by location (urban, suburban and rural) and years in business. In 1987, limited-menu and full-menu restaurants tended to incur lower median rents in the country and suburbs than did similar operations situated in the city. Limited-menu, no-tableservice establishments, on the other hand, had the highest median rents when located in the suburbs and the lowest when stationed in rural areas.

Taxes also varied depending on the establishment's location. At both full-menu and limited-menu restaurants, rural operators paid out a higher percentage of their sales revenue in taxes and property insurance than did either their urban or suburban counterparts.

—Sebastian O'Kelly

Foodservice Market Measure #3 August 1988

Although it will take many more months before we can fully evaluate month-to-month changes, it appears that restaurant patronage in July and August did not reach the level attained in June. Assuming that June was not an aberration, summer started with a relatively high 47 percent of surveyed adults reporting they ate out on a typical day. But that proportion slipped in July to 43 percent and maintained that level in August, with 44 percent of adults saying they were foodservice patrons on a typical day.

In August, 29 percent of the 1,000 adults interviewed reported they ate at a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or another place where they purchased a meal or snack. Approximately one in six, 18 percent, purchased food to go or for delivery.

The apparent decline in off-premises patronage, from 32 percent in June to 30 percent in July and 29 percent in August, is attributed to a decrease in dinner patronage and a decline in the number of females who ate out on a typical day.

The July-to-August drop in on-premises dinner patronage, which approaches significance in statistical terms, is offset in part by a gain in snack patronage.

Takeout-dinner patronage was off as well. Nevertheless, off-premises lunch and snack patronage were up, more than counterbalancing the decline in dinner patronage.

Overall on-premises customers accounted for 66 percent of the total in August, versus 33 percent for off-premises customers. The on-premises proportion is slightly below the level reached in July but similar to June's 67 percent.

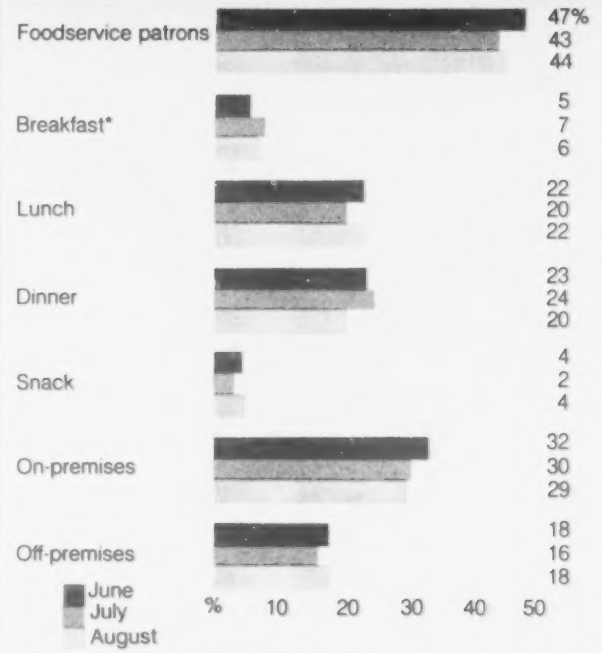
Female patronage off

Although the proportion of males patronizing a foodservice outlet on a typical day in August was 52 percent, just 37 percent of adult women were foodservice customers. Furthermore, although the incidence of patronage by males changed little in the summer months, there was a significant decrease in the proportion of women patronizing foodservice outlets—down from 45 percent in June to 37 percent in August.

As female patronage slipped, the differential between the proportion of males who patronized foodservice outlets on a typical day and that of females who did so changed substantially. In June, 50 percent of all males and 45 percent of females were customers, but by August the gap had widened to 52 percent of males and only 37 percent of females.

The demographic characteristics of those who apparently dropped out of the market from June to August include women who are not employed, those who are not married and those who are 65 years old and older. Here we can speculate that hot weather may keep older women who don't work from venturing out to eat. —*Susan Mills*

Percent of adults who were patrons on a typical day



*This corrects breakfast figure for July.

Source: National Restaurant Association, Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day, summer 1988

Female patronage dropped in the summer

	June	July	August
All Adults	47%	43%	44%
Males	50%	47%	52%
Females	45%	40%	37%

Source: National Restaurant Association, Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?

☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack, or

☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.

2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest, such as smoking versus no-smoking sections, tipping versus service charges, and nutritional concerns.

1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: West Cornwall, CT
Association member: Charles Wilfong
Operation: Freshfields
Profile: Upscale restaurant offering New American cuisine
In business: 3 years
Seats: 95
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Freshfields' location on a stream crossed by a covered bridge makes it an attraction all year round, but the restaurant is especially busy during the fall when people drive through the area to admire the colorful changing foliage.

Freshfields offers the leaf-peepers and those customers who have weekend or summer homes in the neighborhood a menu that changes daily and features baked-on-premises bread and desserts, lots of fresh farm products, and fish and meats grilled over mesquite.

A popular item is *Jalapeno Chevre Chicken*—a boneless chicken breast stuffed with goat cheese and basil and glazed with an apple-jelly/jalapeno mixture.

The restaurant's most famous dessert is its *Mile-High Pie* (the actual thickness is approximately five inches), consisting of a chocolate-cookie-crumb crust, three layers of Haagen Daz ice cream—chocolate, vanilla and coffee—a layer of meringue and a drizzle of hot fudge sauce.

2 MID ATLANTIC

Location: Hallam, PA
Association members: Philip Mackley, Brian Hohenadal, Dennis Traub
Operation: Mackley's Mill Restaurant
Profile: Upscale restaurant with casual seafood section
In business: 2 years
Seats: 85
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Guests have a choice at Mackley's Mill: They can order such specialties as *Veal with Feta Cream Sauce* in a formal dining area, or they can opt to eat crabs and shrimp in the all-you-can-eat seafood section, where tables are covered with paper.

"Normally business is very good," says manager **Brian Hohenadel.** "We are always filled on weekends." Located in York County amidst woods and farmland, Mackley's Mill depends on private parties and local events for much of its business. In November, for example, it serves hors d'oeuvres and tea after hunts, and in the spring it can expect house tours to bring in between 200 and 250 extra customers.

The restaurant itself is one of the attractions on the house tour because its exterior has been unchanged since it was built as a flour mill in 1736.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Greenville, SC
Association member: Charles McMullen
Operation: Blockhouse Restaurant
Profile: Midscale, casual restaurant in three buildings
In business: 6½ years
Seats: 196
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Blockhouse owner **Charlie McMullen** has just completed expanding his restaurant to handle the growing business in Greenville, a town in the foothills of Appalachia that has become a thriving business center, thanks to its plentiful supply of workers, low rents, accessibility and pleasant climate. "We've experienced 15 percent growth every year," McMullen says.

Named after a steeplechase that takes place each year 30 miles from Greenville, McMullen has carried out the equestrian theme by decorating the restaurant with old prints of horse-racing and fox hunts and with photos of customers who have taken part in the restaurant's annual excursion to the steeplechase.

Blockhouse serves steaks, prime rib and six different kinds of fish, with a daily special that just might include McMullen's catch from one of his deep-sea fishing expeditions off the Carolina coast.

During September, when the restaurant had to be closed because of the remodeling that doubled its seating, McMullen found a way to keep his customers happy. He threw a party every Friday night in the partly finished restaurant, with free food and drinks. "We had to let them know we still wanted their business," he says.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Milwaukee, WI
Association members: Edward Levi, John B. Burns
Operation: Heinemann's
Profile: Chain of coffee shops
In business: 65 years
Seats: Average of 145 in each
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

What began as a candy business in 1923 has expanded into a company that today owns seven coffee shops, one fast food place and one gourmet restaurant. The coffee shops, in Milwaukee's suburbs and downtown office buildings, are serviced by a central commissary that makes deliveries two times a day. "We pride ourselves on the quality we turn out," says co-owner **Edward Levi,** nephew of the founder. Fresh hamburger buns, homemade soups and "the best cup of coffee in town," plus an average check price of $4.50 draw 3½ million customers each year.

"Business is great. We had our biggest profit yet in August," says Levi. "But we do have one big problem; we can't get enough help."

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Birmingham, AL
Association members: Bernard Axel, Robin

Holcom, Sarah Bailey, Yvonne Shepherd
Operation: Christian's Classic Cuisine
Profile: Upscale restaurant in hotel
In business: 12 years
Seats: 125
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

After being located in a Birmingham suburb for 10½ years, Christian's Classic Cuisine moved into an Embassy Suites Hotel 18 months ago—five minutes from downtown. Whereas the old restaurant was small, seating 60 and employing 11, the new location seats 125 and employs 105. "Business is great," says assistant manager **Sarah Bailey.** "We are constantly busy."

Classic Cuisine's customers enjoy an international menu in the garden setting of the hotel's atrium. They may order an appetizer of lobster bisque, or small meat pies served with a bearnaise sauce. For an entree a popular choice is the black-ink-and-saffron fettucine tossed in a garlic herb butter with assorted shellfish.

Wine is always an important part of the meal—a gazebo houses a cruvinet and a stock of several hundred bottles of imported and domestic wines, and the restaurant's sommelier serves the wine and trains the staff to make knowledgeable recommendations.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Eden Prairie, MN
Association members: Bert and Bonnie Noterman
Operation: Lions Tap
Profile: Tableservice restaurant specializing in hamburgers
In business: 36 years
Seats: 200
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

The Lions Tap began in 1933 as a roadside food market in the Minneapolis suburb of Eden Prairie. Gradually the owners added beer, then hamburgers. Today the roadside stand is gone and a cozy-looking restaurant, with wood paneling, a fireplace and pictures of Minnesota wildlife has taken its place. Hamburgers, spiced with the owner's special award-winning seasoning, french fries, beer and soft drinks are all the restaurant serves to the customers, who come from all over Minnesota.

"Business is excellent," owner **Bert Noterman** says. "We serve between 14,000 and 16,000 people a week. That's as much as we can handle." Noterman advertises throughout the state and believes in promotions. For example, during the 1987 Twins World Series, he gave away autographed baseballs at one of the games.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Fort Smith, AK
Association member: Dick Smith
Operation: Catfish Cove
Profile: Casual family restaurant serving Southern food
In business: 17 years
Seats: 185
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

When Fort Smith corporations entertain their Northern clients, they bring them to Catfish Cove for catfish and the restaurant's famous hush puppies. Fried okra, black-eyed peas, turnip greens and homemade cobbler are available for those who want "our type of food [Southern]." Other items on the menu include frog legs, Alaskan king-crab legs, shrimp scampi, hickory-smoked barbecued ribs and chicken strips.

"Business has been growing every year," says owner **Dick Smith,** but it took its biggest jump five years ago—50 percent—when he put in a buffet line. Smith thinks it has made his business more consistent and predictable and says it leaves less room for waitress error and, therefore, dissatisfied customers.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Santa Fe, NM
Association members: Gordon Heiss, Susan Keller, Meg Hayes, Todd Sanson
Operation: La Casa Sena
Profile: Upscale restaurant specializing in Spanish/Indian food
In business: 5 years
Seats: 100, 70 on the patio
Meals served: Lunch, dinner, Sunday brunch

La Casa Sena is steeped in history. It was originally the house of Jose Sena, a Civil War hero who fought for the Union beside Kit Carson, and the building has been restored to look the way it did in those days—with white adobe walls, oak flooring and a high-beamed ceiling. On the walls hang paintings of famous Taos and Santa Fe artists of the 30s, on permanent loan from a local art gallery. The furniture is natural pine, handmade in Sante Fe. There is a modern touch to this restaurant, too. Singing waiters perform Broadway show tunes nightly.

President and general manager **Gordon Heiss** has tried to make the food historically correct as well. The restaurant serves a blend of Spanish and Indian cooking—not the same as Mexican cooking, Heiss is quick to point out. Tortillas are made from the blue corn grown by the Hopi Indians; and Dixon chiles—a sun-dried product—or a special green chile are some of the trademarks of this type of cooking. "Business is good," says Heiss. "Every year we've been nicely ahead of the previous year."

9 PACIFIC

Location: Sacramento, CA
Association members: Michael Crete, Richard Stevens, Joe Handel, Pete Lenz, Bruce Davis, Gigi Sievers
Operation: China King Express
Profile: Chinese takeout and delivery
In business: 3 months
Seats: None
Meal served: Dinner

After selling his wine-cooler business, **Michael Crete** spent two years doing research before opening the China King Express in Fair Oaks, a suburb of Sacramento. He and his partners wanted to appeal to the two-income families who are too tired at the end of the day to cook, so they offer takeout and a delivery service that gets fresh, hot food to customers. The menu is limited to 10 Chinese dishes known to be favored by Americans. Chow mein is the top seller, but fried rice, sweet-and-sour pork and a spicy Mongolian beef are also popular.

Crete reports that after three months in operation, repeat business is very good, "but they're not knocking down the doors yet."

—Julie Fintel

Fax food

The Danbury, Connecticut, Burger King has gotten a food-preparation-technology boost from its neighbor. It is operating a fax machine loaned by Fujitsu Imaging Systems of America, whose headquarters are nearby, to take orders from Fujitsu employees.

Using telephone lines to transmit digital signals, fax machines can send, receive and reproduce written material. Now, instead of waiting in line, Fujitsu employees fax over their orders first and then stop by to pick them up. The fax machine brings in about $100 a week in orders, according to Sandy Ventresca, the company's district manager.

—The New York Times

Poupon propellant

It seems to work with whipped cream, so why not put mustard or ketchup into an aerosol can, wondered Enviro-Spray Systems Inc., in Hoboken, New Jersey. The company spent eight years developing a carbon dioxide system that works.

The unusual packaging format has so far been successful for at least 30 different food products. It is particularly adaptable to condiments, because it maintains their flavor, extends their shelf life and features a tamper-proof container.

Though the packaging costs are slightly higher than for bottled condiments, a French firm, Claude Vetillard Co., is betting that its aerosol ketchup will find its way to the hot-dog vendor and to the American dinner table beside the hamburger buns.

—Entrepreneur

Nurturing minorities

A long-term program to increase opportunities for minorities helped raise the number of minority-owned Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) restaurants by more than 20 percent last year, according to a report issued recently by the company's Minority Business Development Council, a group of executives that advises top management at KFC and works throughout the organization to ensure that opportunities for minorities are realized.

At the end of 1987, 51 black businesspeople were operating 120 Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurants in the United States—up from 98 restaurants the previous year. The company plans to open 20 new minority-owned restaurants annually.

KFC's program to encourage franchise ownership by minorities includes a guaranteed-loan program that has made loans amounting to more than $38 million since 1983. KFC works with 18 minority-owned banks that together provide a $15 million line of credit to assist in establishing minority-owned KFC franchises. The banks handle restaurant deposits and participate in the company's cash-transfer system.

—Kentucky Fried Chicken

Keeping the memory alive

In addition to driving a white-on-white 1973 Cadillac El Dorado with an "I Love Elvis" bumper sticker, Karl Beckley, the chef and owner of the Green Lake Grill in Seattle, is keeping the Elvis memory alive in his restaurant.

The Green Lake Grill's Burning Love cocktail, named after the old Elvis hit, consists of near-frozen, pepper-flavored Stolichnaya vodka poured into a shot glass emblazoned with Elvis's likeness. Margaret Morse, the mother of Beckley's bartender, lives near enough to Graceland to buy cases of the official Elvis shot glasses, which she ships to Seattle. The cocktail glass is included in the $6.00 price of the drink, and Beckley said he has had trouble keeping up with demand.

—The New York Times

Invading the airwaves

Restaurants—and restaurateurs—are getting prime time on television. Tattinger's, a new drama about a Manhattan restaurant and its owner, made its debut October 26 on NBC. In addition, a New York cable station is now airing the Restaurant Channel, a lively mix of restaurant information, food trends and recipes, and soon hopes to expand into other markets.

To give the Tattinger's series a more realistic air, the studio set has a kitchen furnished with real equipment, although fire laws stipulate that cooking must be done off premises. In addition, some of the furniture, because it comes from the Quilted Giraffe, might seem familiar to restaurant-savvy New Yorkers.

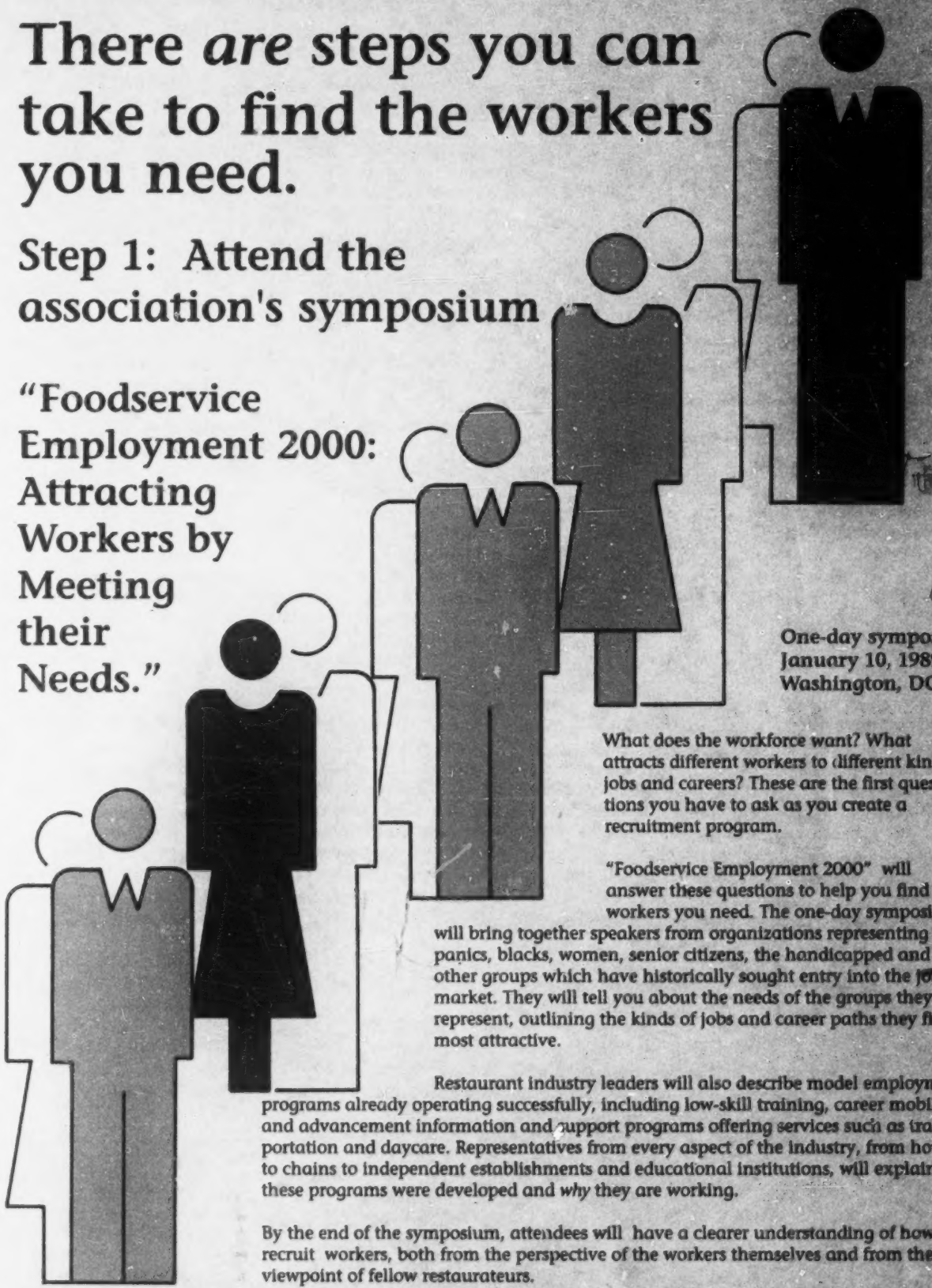
But the biggest treat for restaurant name-droppers is in the third episode, when several restaurateurs appear on the show. David Liederman of Chez Louis and David's Cookies, Joseph Baum of the Rainbow Room and Aurora, George Lang of Cafe des Artistes, and Elaine Kaufman of Elaine's all have cameo roles in the episode.

The Restaurant Channel also features restaurateurs and chefs, but they are more in their element, as they demonstrate their specialties for food enthusiasts. In addition, a narrator reads clips from leading magazines and newspapers about food news, such as young children dining in fine restaurants, egg creams in Russia or a chocolate factory in Brooklyn.

—The New York Times and *Cook's Magazine*

There *are* steps you can take to find the workers you need.

Step 1: Attend the association's symposium



"Foodservice Employment 2000: Attracting Workers by Meeting their Needs."

One-day symposium
January 10, 1989
Washington, DC

What does the workforce want? What attracts different workers to different kinds of jobs and careers? These are the first questions you have to ask as you create a recruitment program.

"Foodservice Employment 2000" will answer these questions to help you find the workers you need. The one-day symposium will bring together speakers from organizations representing Hispanics, blacks, women, senior citizens, the handicapped and other groups which have historically sought entry into the job market. They will tell you about the needs of the groups they represent, outlining the kinds of jobs and career paths they find most attractive.

Restaurant industry leaders will also describe model employment programs already operating successfully, including low-skill training, career mobility and advancement information and support programs offering services such as transportation and daycare. Representatives from every aspect of the industry, from hotels to chains to independent establishments and educational institutions, will explain *how* these programs were developed and *why* they are working.

By the end of the symposium, attendees will have a clearer understanding of how to recruit workers, both from the perspective of the workers themselves and from the viewpoint of fellow restaurateurs.

"Foodservice Employment 2000" will be held on Tuesday, January 10, 1989 at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, DC. The cost is only $30 per person. A complete brochure outlining the program will be mailed to members shortly. For more information, call the association's Communications Department at 202/331-5900 or 800/424-5156.